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THE

VALUE AND IMPORTANCE

OF THE

SCOTTISH FISHERIES,

COMPREHENDING FULLY EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE CONNECTED WITH THEIR PRESENT POSITION.

BY

JAMES THOMSON.

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF FIFE.

MY LORD,

Having for a number of years received from you much continued kindness, and many acts of distinguished favour, permit me, as a tribute of gratitude and deep respect, to dedicate to your Lordship my first essay in authorship.

It is an effort, my Lord, to accomplish some good to a branch of great national industry, and it is the hope of the Author, that it may be received by the public with some degree of favour, rather in that light than for any intrinsic merit which it may possess.

I remain,

MY LORD,

Your humble and

Obedient Servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

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INTRODUCTION.

GENERAL VALUE OF THE SCOTTISH FISHERIES.

In venturing before the British public with a work of the kind, it is the wish of the Author that he had possessed greater talent, the interest and importance of the subject to be treated being of the highest order. From its national bearing, there is solid ground for claim to public attention. The work has for its object the reanimating an interest in a most valuable branch of our commercial wealth. Our fisheries are in close alliance with the comforts and enjoyments of thousands of our fellow countrymen. They have an intimate connexion with general industry. It is abundantly obvious that the riches which through them could be created might be immense—distributed amongst the various classes of the whole community. There is no other source, indeed, which flows so directly home to the welfare of our northern population. The production of wealth is indispensable to life, and this is teeming along our

coasts, requiring but the immutable law of our nature—our labour to create.

The production of our seas bears a strong analogy with that of our mines. In the one case as in the other, the raw produce and the labour, form five-sixths of the value. In many parts of our globe, man has to combat with sterility; but here activity has but to assume the place of indolence, to secure a full harvest of return. As to the general division of the gain amongst the various classes of the community, here there is no fiction, but a sound and comforting reality. The money from the ocean finds its way into every pocket, and thus, from the patient hand of industry, drops the real elixir of existence. In ancient times, in the days of Greece and Rome, their inhabitants looked on it in the light of degradation, the being occupied in either manufactures or commerce; but we live in a different age, and in a different land. It is the pride and boast of every Briton that he holds a first place in skill of manufacture, and that his commerce is only bounded by a world. Of this commerce in our fisheries, the crown of England has a large share. Around the island of Great Britain, from the best statistical information, it is found that, in the Herring Fishery, there is en-

gaged a body of about seventy thousand hardy, and, more or less, skilful fishermen, with a complement of boats, comprising a fleet of 15,279. The men who are our fishers during the herring season, follow their calling in the cod, ling, and haddock; so that the number of seventy thousand is about the full amount of the Scottish fishermen. This, however, is no mean aggregate; and, with their wives and families, will be found to form no insignificant part of the inhabitants of our native land. Great Britain and its sister island has been for many a year complaining of a redundant population, because of its many unemployed and therefore poor. To combat this state of matters, emigration has been resorted to on the most extensive scale which the wisdom and prudence of a paternal government could apply. In this point of view, however, it will at once be seen how highly to be prized is any branch of commerce, which, by giving a sufficient subsistence to thousands of the people, can assist in giving a healthy tone to society. In accomplishing this, the Scottish fisheries have been of much value, and the good they do might yet be greatly extended. The ebbing and flowing of commerce are as the tides of the ocean, ever on the move; and as our sea fishings have dependence on

the wind and on the weather, so, as one of the running streams of trade, a degree of uncertainty must ever appertain to it. Yet the fisheries are valuable to the country—most valuable. It may be questioned if not as to real internal gain and usefulness, both to the subject and to the State, they do not assume the first position. As one of the first, they must undoubtedly be held. This may appear a bold opinion; but to those who have been practically most largely acquainted with them, the reflection of their worth will lead them to a belief not thought of by the general body of society. The climate of a country may be good—it may have rich resources in its natural productions—in its friths and harbours—its lakes and rivers—still, for its physical strength, it must depend on its inhabitants—their numbers—their industry—their skill—their knowledge. These form the aggregate of a nation's wealth. Upon this data, then, let the worth of the fisheries be considered Whatever has been done by national aid to foster this part of trading enterprise has been returned in a tenfold—nay, a hundred-fold ratio. Even at the time when the highest bounty of four shillings per barrel was expended from the public exchequer, there must have been a large balance in favour of the treasury.

Not only is the gain direct from the fisherman, but it is also on every article of necessity or luxury in use by every subject, in any way hanging on this interest for support. The fact may be given, that, for every hundred thousand pounds worth of salted fish exported to a foreign country, little less than ninety thousand pounds return to it in gain for produce and labour; and if it were the case that the whole was carried by British shipping, then, there would be little short of a return of the whole amount. In our cotton manufacture, in our linen, and in our silk, the raw material has to be imported. The similitude to fisheries is nearest in the mineral world—in coal—in iron—in tin, and in salt.

The fruitfulness of the sea is a demonstration of nature, intended as a blessing to our race—a part of the beautiful economy of our globe to be adapted by man to his happiness, and to his physical comfort and content.

RISE OF THE FISHERIES IN DIFFERENT LOCALITIES AND THE PROGRESS THEY HAVE MADE.

ON the rise of the Herring Fishery, it is found that previous to the 15th century, its mention may be said not to be given in historical record. There is not a doubt, however, that it had long previously existed. It is heard of in the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries. At these early periods, the Dutch had the supremacy over other nations in the working of this mine of national wealth, and though England had the desire to share in its advantages, no energetic attempt was made till the reign of Elizabeth. For assistance in prosecution of this fishery, a sum of £80,000 was then provided; and since that period one company after another has been formed, always favoured by royal and the highest patronage in the kingdom. In 1632, in 1660, in 1677, in 1713, and in 1749, the British Herring Fishery drew to itself the notice of government; and, in coming to later times, it is found that the years 1808 and 1815 are memorable for acts of the legislature which, in their influence on the fishery, have reached the present day.

As a general remark it will be found, that at many of the stations along the Murray Frith, the

springing up of the herring fishery was about the year 1815,—when the bounty of four shillings per barrel came into play,—and that as it has fallen away in these localities, the boats are found to have congregated and increased, and the fishing taken deeper root where the advantage of a good and commodious harbour, with fair fishing ground, could be enjoyed.

The salmon and cod fishings have existed, it may be said, from the remotest period. The salmon fishings were indeed formerly confined to the rivers, and it is not many years since the bag and stake fishings were established along the coasts as they now are in every locality where there is the least probability of success. In the north east of Scotland the shores are thickly planted with them, so much so that a common observer would think that the progress of the salmon on their way to the rivers would be entirely obstructed. There cannot be any reasonable doubt that, from this cause, the river fishings have been, and must continue to be, seriously injured, and their value reduced. In Scotland, the haddock fishing, for the consumption of the country, has also been prosecuted by our fishermen from time immemorial. In some parts of the coast, particularly on the Aberdeenshire, it is many and many a year since the peculiar mode of smoking the haddock rendered it a delicacy; and the name of Findon was celebrated over the land for producing a haddock, which, at the breakfast table, was considered, by those within whose reach it could be had, as the greatest treat which the stranger could enjoy. Of late years, however, the haddock has assumed, on the

east coast of Scotland, a place of much greater importance. The smoking of the haddock for exportation to London and the southern markets has become a regular and well organised business. No correct statistical account of its worth can be given; but, on the Banffshire coast, it seems to have taken a position which, to the numerous fishermen in that district, has given a complete change to the value of their winter labour. In the short distance between Cullen and Portgordon—only a few miles—there are twenty extensive smoking houses for haddocks. The boats are under the same regular engagements as for the herring fishing; and the daily catch is so closely looked after by the curers, that a haddock for the table at Buckie is commonly as rare as at a distance in the country of twenty miles.

WICK.

ON the fishing interest, this is truly a wonderful place. What Liverpool is in cotton—what Manchester is in cotton manufacture—what Sheffield is in steel—what Birmingham is in iron goods—what a Glasgow is in varied industry—so is Wick the emporium of the Scottish herring fishery. With its eight hundred boats, collected, during the season, from every quarter of the coast within 150 miles of distance, and its 4000 fishermen, it stands on a proud pre-eminence in the United Kingdom as the head and chief focus of fishing industry. It is also

one of the oldest strongholds of fishing enterprize. It is recorded that, a hundred years ago, a fleet of boats left Cromarty for the herring fishing at Caithness. In the fluctuating character of the business, Wick has seen, by turns, periods of prosperity as well as the reverse. Through every vicissitude of fortune, it has, however, struggled, and, at the present day, presents a spectacle in the months of July and August of a peculiar kind, not to be met with again in this part of the world, if, indeed, in any other. From the heights of Pulteneytown, overlooking the quays and curers' stations, one has before him, as it were, an extended plain covered with thousands and tens of thousands of barrels, interspersed, at short distances, with the busy scene of delivery, of packing and of salting, and all the bustle and detail attendant on the cure. It is a scene difficult to describe, and has ever struck those witnessing it for the first time with wonder and surprise.

The old town of Wick has not much advanced in size or consequence for many years. The great addition is Pulteneytown. This extensive place, with its wide streets and large squares, is built on property belonging to the British Society for extending the fisheries, and is feued by them in perpetuity. In Lower Pulteney, the chief seat of business, a feu 60 feet by 120, is charged about £3 15s. yearly;—and, in Upper Pulteney, 50 feet by 100, about £1 10s. There are two harbours which are both the property of the British Society, the burgh of Wick having sold its right of collecting shore dues to the Society for a yearly sum of £40 ster. The herring boats, which deliver their fish on the Wick

side, do so at jetties built at the private expense of the curers. The harbours are commodious, and have been erected at vast expense. As far as depth of water is concerned, though vessels of a thousand barrels may occasionally be detained for a tide or two, yet for the trade and the greatest number of vessels frequenting the port, there cannot in this respect be said to be a drawback. The amount of cure in herring in the Wick district is given for season 1848, at 105,104 barrels. In former years, Ireland and the West Indies were the chief markets for produce from this quarter. Ireland even now possesses a considerable share; but, latterly, from circumstances, attention has been directed more to the foreign trade, the export being, in the year alluded to, to places in Europe, though chiefly to Germany, 43,156 barrels, of which were selected, and branded full, 30,890 barrels. Where so many boats congregate, there will be of course much variety of success; and as the fishing ground is nightly covered with nets to a far extent, so there is not a day but there are those who fall in with the shoal in one direction or another. Though the average of a Wick fishing may be called, up or down, about a hundred crans per boat, there are boats bringing to land their 300 and 400 crans, whilst others have proportionally few. In this chance of success must lie a chief attraction to fishermen in their preference to an annual resort to Caithness. If they do not get the golden prize the one year, they live in hopes for the following, and thus distance from home is for a time overlooked, and the inconvenience of a crowded population patiently borne with, in anticipation of

the fortune which will follow. Our Scottish coast has a beauty peculiarly its own,—a beauty bringing into being a scene full of interest and pleasure to those who ever witnessed it. This is the evening departure of the boats for sea, enjoyed undoubtedly most fully from the rocky cliffs in the neighbourhood of Wick.

Here, in the months of July and August, on the fine summer evening, for a long succession of years past, the eye might be regaled with as lovely a sea-view as any in the island. The signs of fishing life commence usually towards four or five o'clock in the afternoon. About this time may be seen hundreds of stalwart fishermen, clad characteristically in north-wester, fear-nothing jackets, and high fishing boots, with kit across the back, containing refreshment for the night. In an hour or two, the expanse of ocean is studded with a thousand tiny barks, each under canvas, and the guidance of the weather-beaten and experienced skipper, bounding along in the direction of the fishing ground which may be the fancy of the time. A more interesting sight cannot be imagined. And then what hopes and fears awake for to-morrow's dawn. There is the anxious wife at home sending up a silent, and oftentimes unconscious prayer, that the haul may be propitious—then there is the curer dreaming on his gains—then there are young hearts fluttering and scarcely breathing the fond hope that Jock or Sandy, at the end of the fishing, may be rich enough to buy the longed-for wedding ring, and call upon the minister.

It is a picture which, in its reality, is warm in the affections of many a Scotchman, and might be,

with pleasure, familiar to the memory of many an Englishman. Continental tours may have the advantage in point of novelty, variety, and general amusement, but a visit to the Hebrides, to Orkney, to Shetland, to Caithness, or to the fishing stations on the Murray Frith, would equally reward the tourist with the genial influence of a pure sky and much lovely scenery, whilst he would become personally prepossessed in favour of the value of one of the national resources of his native land.

HELMSDALE.

THE rise of the herring fishing at Helmsdale, on the Sutherland coast, was in the year 1813. From that period it went on progressing, and arrived at the goodly number of 200 boats, annually engaged from various parts to prosecute the adventure. This number, indeed, may be given as an average one for many past years. In the year 1840, indeed, it reached as high as 256. The harbour cannot be said to be either spacious or commodious, but, as there is not much shipping attracted to it for any business, save that connected with its fishery, the 200 boats find room enough, though this is about the number which could conveniently assemble. The harbour is protected by a bar, and, within it, there is a depth of eight feet water in neap tides, and of fourteen in stream. On the bar, there is a foot additional. The curing yards at this station, have long

been famed as about the most complete on the coast —fitted up on the most convenient plan—roomy, substantial, and having every necessary appendage in storehouses, packing sheds, salt cellars—all most suitably arranged for the proper management of the fish. The fishings at Helmsdale are but rarely what may be termed heavy.

There is an excellent fishing bank lies off Helmsdale, and the fish are generally met with within three miles of the shore, between the Ord of Caithness and Loth Bay. For a Baltic cure, for which the fish are now mostly made up, this station holds the first rank, and though there has been a falling off in the native boats belonging to it, yet there is no symptom of real decay, more than is experienced by the fishing interest generally, and there is no place more likely to maintain its position, provided the circumstances of the times will permit. The harbour dues are moderate. Helmsdale is the property of his Grace the Duke of Sutherland.

PETERHEAD.

PETERHEAD is a town which has been for many a year famed for its persevering prosecution of the whale fishing. In this perilous adventure, it has been famed for the excellence of its ships, with skilfulness of the crews; and, though success has not invariably attended the voyages, yet, in proportion to its share in the adventure, Peterhead has manufactured more Greenland and Davis'

Straits oil than any other port in the kingdom. It is, however, as a herring-fishing station that it has in this work to be described. Till about the year 1830, as a herring-fishing station it was not much known, but, from this period, the progress has been wonderfully rapid. In number of boats during the fishing season, it ranks now second on the list.

This rise in the herring trade must be greatly attributed to the fitness of its locality, assisted by the spirit by which the business has been pursued by those embarking their capital. Peterhead possesses a spacious and roomy harbour. It has a fine depth of water. Vessels of every size, suitable to the business, can have free egress and ingress at every state of tide. The harbour has two basins with an entrance to the north and one to the south. When a communication is cut between the two basins, which has been resolved on, then vessels can proceed to sea with almost every wind. From the easterly position of Peterhead on the coast, it is well suited for the trade in fish with the Baltic, in which it is now largely participating. From its situation it also draws to it curers who have establishments for smoking in the south, it being convenient for their monthly vessels in the expeditious carriage of the fish. At this station in the past season of 1848, there were about 400 boats, inclusive of those fishing at the neighbouring village of Boddam. That village is the property of the Earl of Aberdeen.

At Peterhead there are various extensive curing establishments. No work of the kind could be more complete in every department than that of Mr. James Hutchison. The Messrs. Simpson are very

extensively engaged; and Mr. John Young, with various others, are on a most respectable footing. The officer from the Board of Fisheries, Mr. M'Kay, has been most zealous in his aid that the cure should attain a high state of excellence. In the future prosperity of the herring fishery, Peterhead has a deep stake, as with its progressive condition, judging how rapidly has already been its increase, there is a field on which capital might in a few years be made use of to double its present amount.

FRASERBURGH.

THE herring fishing has been prosecuted at Fraserburgh for the last thirty to forty years. In its commencement, there was not much done; the growth of the enterprise was but gradual and exposed to considerable vicissitude. It was not till Lord Saltoun, the proprietor, made a gift of the harbour to the town, that any great advance began to show itself. After this a grant from government in aid of the harbour works was obtained, and then a new spirit of life began to manifest itself. The new harbour was planned on a most extensive scale; executed and improved upon, until, for fishing purposes it is now one of the best in the north of Scotland. For the last twenty years, Fraserburgh as a station for the herring trade has been advancing, and, at the present day, it takes its place as the third on the coast. The number of boats annually at the

fishing ranges from 280 to 300. The success of the catch has been, during a long period, singularly good and nearly uniform. Fraserburgh is a fine headland, and the fishermen have excellent ground for fishing both to the west and to the south. The trade in herrings has all along been principally to the Baltic, and, for the last few years the export in that direction has been very considerable. Between the jetties in the harbour, there is a depth of water at neap tides of about ten feet, and in spring tides, of about thirteen. If the improvements which are at present proposed were gone into, and a new harbour made, all at the back of the north pier, there would be four feet more water, and three to four hundred boats could run in at low water. Curing on the beach is not now known at Fraserburgh; every one of its numerous curers, having his yard with salt cellars, packing sheds, and storehouses, all fitted up with necessary convenience. The amount of adventure by individual curers is varied from four up to thirty boats. No officer could evince a greater wish than Mr. Sutherland, who has been long located there, that any benefit arising from the regulations of the Fishery Board should attend the character of the cure.

MACDUFF.

THIS station, in the herring fishery, dates its rise about the year 1815. Since that period, its trade in this branch has considerably varied. From the year 1830 to 1838 may be given as the time of its greatest prosperity. As to fishing ground, it may be considered well situated. The catch is seldom weighty; the fish are brought in moderate quantities—4, 5, and up to 10 crans—seldom exceeding—so that the curers have them in salt at an early part of the day. This is a great advantage for the Baltic cure—and for this market the cure has been put up—more than three-fourths of it for upwards of twenty years. The number of boats at one time amounted to a hundred—in latter years they have fallen away to about sixty. There are a few establishments in every way commodious and suitable to the cure of white herrings and also of smoking. Amongst others may be mentioned the excellent and extensive premises and curing houses and yards of Messrs. Nesbit & Co., Mr. J. Robinson, Provost Carny, Mr. Alexander Watt, and Mr. James M'Eachran; all upon a most respectable scale, and fitted up with every possible convenience. The present harbour is not capacious—not capable of giving perfect accommodation to more than 60 to 70 boats. The depth of water will be about eleven and twelve feet at spring and seven and eight and a half at neap tides. The shore-dues are moderate. The town of Macduff is the property of the Earldom of Fife.

BANFF.

ABOUT 1815, the herring fishery became established, and it went on increasing, until 1822, when there were about ninety boats. From this time it however gradually fell away, and for the last few years the trade has been very circumscribed. In its harbour there would be fair accommodation for sixty or seventy boats; and it has a good depth of water for every purpose connected with the business—seventeen feet at spring tides, and eleven feet at neap. The harbour is the property of the town. The locality for fishing ground is the same as Macduff, there being but a mile betwixt the two harbours; and there is but one supposition to be made, namely, that the fishery here needs but the stimulus of being found remunerative, to influence capital being again employed to the extent which convenience might render desirable both to fishermen and curers.

Though Banff has for the present lost its position as the seat of a fishery, it has long had a large share of the foreign commission business. For many years the head establishments have been here of the well known and highly respectable firms of formerly, Messrs. Walter Biggar & Co., now, Messrs. Nesbit & Co.; and of Messrs. Gräpel & Co., now, Messrs. Grant & Co. The house of Mr. Alexander Murray of Whitehills also transacts his chief business in Banff. Some years back, these houses would together have had the export on German account of 60 to 70,000 barrels. For the present, this business is somewhat

restricted; but it has ever been the best and safest for every party connected with it, both at home and abroad.

PORTSOY.

BEFORE the year 1816, Portsoy did not possess a herring fishery; however, about that period, under the encouragement no doubt of the 4s. per barrel bounty, boats were fitted out, and the catch proving moderately successful, the trade increased annually. In the year 1821, it had reached its greatest height and sent every season to the fishing about 100 boats. This state of matters continued till about the year 1832; adding much to the bustle, business, and prosperity of the town. Since then, there has been a gradual falling off, and, in the year 1848, there was but the small adventure from this port of 25 boats. Portsoy is well situated for the trade, and nought else but an accumulation of adverse circumstances could have brought the business to so low an ebb. The fishing ground is good, and though the catch is but seldom heavy, yet, on an average number of years, 100 and 150 crans per boat may be expected. They are brought in quantities which enable the curers to do them every justice for the Baltic markets, in which direction the trade has been chiefly directed for the last twenty years. The harbour has a fair depth of water. At spring tides, there is inside, ten feet, and in neap, seven and eight feet. The harbour is not so commodious as it

was some years back. An addition had been made on the old harbour, which both to ships and boats proved of much advantage; however, the outer quays were not proof against the power of the ocean. In one of those severe storms which occasionally break out, the defences gave way. This injury has not been repaired, and the trade has, therefore, again concentrated in the old harbour, one of the oldest and at one time the most frequented on the coast. The harbour dues are moderate. This town is the property of the Earl of Seafield, and commands the trade of a considerable agricultural district.

CULLEN.

AT this port, situated on the east side of the picturesque bay of the same name, the herring fishing has been more or less prosecuted since about the year 1815. It did not, however, advance to so great an extent, even under the excitement of bounty, as from its locality might have been expected. It possesses very fair fishing ground, and is in the immediate vicinity of those hives of fishing industry, Portknockie and Buckie. It has a snug enough little harbour, with ten and a half feet water at stream and seven and a half feet at neap tides. The largest number of boats fishing in one year was in 1829. It had that season thirty-four. The years of greatest success were 1830 and 1831. There are thirty boats belonging to the place, with about se-

venty-five fishermen. Of late years, however, the adventure in the herring fishery has almost been entirely forsaken, for, in season 1848, there were but three boats going to sea for this purpose. This want of energy in a branch which used to circulate a few thousand pounds annually amongst the inhabitants, can only be accounted for from the discouraging state which the business has been gradually assuming. Places such as Cullen were the first to feel the pressure of too contracted a field for the sale of herrings, and the perseverance of those inclined and well able in capital, spirit, and skill, to carry on the trade, has been at last obliged to yield to the more powerful influence of non-remunerative markets. For the last few years, it has partaken of the recently established business in that quarter, the export of smoked haddocks. There are three smoking houses capable of smoking at one time about 200 barrels. The harbour dues are moderate. Cullen is the property of the Earl of Seafield.

LOSSIEMOUTH.

THE herring fishery was first made trial of at Lossiemouth in the year 1819. In that season, the adventure was with only four boats; but, in the following, there were ten; and at this port there has been always something doing, and on the side of increase, there being at the fishing of 1848, thirty-six boats. The Lossiemouth fishermen were

employed at the herring fishery since 1814; but from that year till 1819 they went, as they could get employed, to Wick, along with the boats from Buckie or neighbouring villages. Lossiemouth being the nearest port to the flourishing town of Elgin, it is but a few years since a joint-stock company was formed for the purpose of erecting a new and commodious harbour. This was carried into full execution, and every accommodation is now afforded to the trade of that town and district which results from a seaport easy of access and perfectly safe, with a fine depth of water. At spring tides there is fourteen feet water, and at neap, ten feet. At Lossiemouth every local advantage is held out for an increase to its fishery. Surrounding the new harbour there is abundance of room suitable for curing establishments. The labour of the fishermen is annually repaid by about 150 crans of herrings per boat on an average, and the curer is encouraged by the knowledge that the carriage of his fish cannot now be impeded as formerly was frequently the case by the inconveniences of a barred harbour and a small depth of water. Lossiemouth is the property of Colonel Brander of Pitgavenny. Between this and the next station of Burghead is the new erection of a small harbour at Hopeman, by Admiral Duff of Drummuir, where there is a good depth of water, fourteen feet at spring, and eight and nine at neap. About fourteen boats fish at it in the herring season, but whether it will arrive at a station of importance is a matter connected with some doubt, though it cannot be denied that the proprietor holds out every encouragement which the nature of the locality can afford.

BURGHEAD.

BURGHEAD, as a fishing station, is finely situated on a headland in the Murray Frith, opposite to the bay of Cromarty. Its herring fishery, as a settled business, may be said to have commenced about the year 1817. Since that period it has partaken of the vicissitudes belonging to the trade. As to number of boats attending the fishery, its most flourishing season was in the year 1828. It had then ninety-three. In season 1848, it had declined to forty-three. None of the fishing stations on the coast could more amply indicate the discouraging state of the fishing business than Burghead. It is possessed of every requisite for its successful prosecution. It has a commodious harbour, capable of large extension, did the prospects of the fishery warrant the outlay. The harbour has a depth of water of eleven feet at neap tides, and fourteen at stream, and boats can get inside the outer-pier and lie in safety at any time of tide, there being never less than six feet water at low tide. From the excellent position of the harbour in the frith, vessels can proceed to sea with almost every wind. On every side there is excellent fishing ground, and it is rarely in the season that, from stress of weather, the boats do not go to sea in one direction or another. Its fishings are sometimes rather heavy, but this lasts but a day, or a couple of days, and are on the whole, moderate and equal, daily from six, eight, and ten crans of fish per boat. Burghead is one of the cleanest fishing towns on the coast, and good steady active

crews of fishermen get every encouragement from the proprietor to settle there, by having comfortable and convenient cottages erected for them; the outlay on which is paid off in so many years, until they become their own at a small feu rent. There is a long range of curing yards, constructed with every attention to convenience, and each yard having its smoking house, salt cellar, storehouse, gutting and and packing sheds, and every other necessary appendage. These are all let by the proprietor at moderate rents. There is another very prominent advantage belonging to this port. It has more the benefit of steam navigation than any of its neighbours. By the erection of a wooden jetty or pier, jutting a considerable distance into the sea, and built on a most secure plan, the steamer plying from Inverness to London is enabled regularly to call every voyage, and the Leith steamer, from the same quarter, is a weekly visitor. Added to this, the short distance from the Caledonian Canal brings the markets of Glasgow, Liverpool, and Bristol, into easy access. A few spirited individuals are now, with some energy, pursuing the smoking of haddocks, and this is likely to be a source of considerable gain to the fishermen, in the winter months. The shore dues are, for a cured barrel of herrings, 1d.; an empty barrel, ½d.; a thousand staves, 1s.; and for a ton of salt, 10d. Burghead is the property of William Young, Esq., Maryhill, Elgin.

FINDHORN.

AT this station, situated a few miles from Burghead, and the shipping port of Forres, there has been a little doing for many years in the herring fishing. The harbour has an excellent depth of water, fifteen feet in spring tides, and ten at neap, and is otherwise quite sufficient for the trade which is carried on. Findhorn lies well as to fishing ground, and, from the perseverance of those curers now in the trade, there would seem to be every inclination to embark greater capital, provided there was the advantage of a more healthy demand to warrant it. But, like all the other stations at the head of the Murray Frith, the adventure droops for that which is its life blood, remunerating markets.

NAIRN.

THE port of Nairn is another of those places where it is clearly proved that there is something radically wrong in the present condition of the Scottish herring fishery. There are sixty boats annually fitted out from it, yet none of these remain at home; they all seek employment at the neighbouring stations, or on the coast of Caithness. About the year 1828 there were cured at this station between 17 and 18,000 barrels of herrings, and now the business is quite forsaken. There is a recent

improvement at this port highly deserving of mention, and which, in a future revival of fishing prosperity, will be of the first consequence. It is the newly extended jetty into the sea, on the east side of the old harbour. It is of the length of 1200 feet. The foundation is of stone work, and the upper part built of timber. The expense was defrayed partly by public subscription, and partly by the Board of Commissioners for the British Fisheries. Its protection to shipping has exceeded the most sanguine expectation. The depth of water for the navigation has been surprisingly increased. At spring tides, there is now thirteen feet, and at neap, eight. There is also a boat harbour capable of containing 100 boats of the largest size in the most perfect safety.

CROMARTY.

CROMARTY is perhaps the oldest scene which tradition presents us with—in the drama of herring fishing—for, in its vicissitude, of the character of drama it certainly has partaken. Cromarty, once the favoured resort of the herring, and the crowded field of flourishing enterprise, is now as it were a neglected waste. This beautiful roadstead, capable of harbouring a British fleet, famed in the seventeenth century for its thronged and busy port, is, in the nineteenth, scarcely known as a mart where former produce can be had. The commercial importance, derived from successful fishing at the period of

the Union, has long ago been lost; and the quiet of the town of Cromarty is left undisturbed by the din of the cooper's hammer, or the clattering of the fishing boot. The following, from the pen of the present highly-talented Editor of *The Witness*, is a lively description of the success of former days:—"In the autumn of 1780, a body of herrings was seen betwixt the Sutors swimming up the frith, with all the accompaniments of a large shoal—whales, porpoises, and flocks of sea-gulls. They passed through the roadstead of the port, and the strait opposite Invergordon, beating the water for several miles into a foam, and giving to it the appearance it presents when ruffled by those sudden land squalls which blacken the surface, but die away before they furrow it into waves. The shoal took up its spawning ground opposite Ardilly, a villa within three miles of Dingwall, and was fished in immense quantities within four hundred yards of the shore. On the following season, a similar body passed the points of Ardersier and Rosemarkie, rested for some time in the bays of Fortrose and Campbelton, and then turned down the frith. Before they went off, however, such quantities were caught, that, for lack of casks, the pits of an old tanyard were cleaned out, and packed with herrings." It is rather surprising that this trade should have fallen at Cromarty into so much decay. With one of the finest harbours in the world, there is abundance of room and accommodation on the quays and around the town for every necessary purpose on a large scale. Curing stations suitable to every appropriate erection could be readily obtained; and, though the fish do not now,

as in past gone years, pass up into the bay itself, yet, the famed fishing bank of Guilliam being in the neighbourhood, it might have been expected that the business, to a certain extent, would have remained permanently so; for though in occasional years there are still a few hundred barrels cured, still the business cannot be said to be regularly prosecuted; what is done being more on a chance system than otherwise. With a general revival, this locality having within it so many of the requirements, that a trade in fishing may again very likely become its staple.

The famous bank of Guilliam lies about the middle of the frith, opposite the bay of Cromarty; and it is recorded that a greater number of herrings have been caught upon it than upon any other equal extent in Scotland. Fishings have been made on it for a whole week, at an average catch daily of nearly a thousand barrels. The surface of the bank is not more than a half square mile. In the year 1816, the fishing at Cromarty was carried on with considerable spirit, and it is related that the fish taking in that season their spawning ground up in the bay of Nairn, immense quantities were caught. Several excellent fishing seasons, and in the year 1819, a company entered into the speculation on a larger scale than previously had been attempted. In the long run, however, their business declined, and with its declension set also the fishing star of Cromarty. In its advantages of navigation, and in its means of easy export, Cromarty has no rival. Vessels can load and leave in any hour during the twenty-four. It has the Caledonian within a few

hours' sail; and, with a prosperous trade, an arrangement with the London Steamer from Inverness, could, without difficulty, be effected. In curing convenience, in fishing ground, and in means of navigation, Cromarty has few, or no equal on the Scottish coast; and yet, strange to say, the herring fishery lies nearly dormant, and in a state of neglect, which better times can alone reanimate.

ROTHSAY.

THE town of Rothsay, and the island of Bute on the west of Scotland, had its share in fishing adventure at a very early period. Its fishing trade was carried on until sometime after 1765, by means chiefly of herring boats, as they were called, of about five tons burthen, and some larger boats or vessels from ten to twenty tons, which attended the fleet of smaller boats and brought herrings from the fishermen, carrying them away fresh to be disposed of as they best could for the consumption of the country, or, they cured and barrelled them up to answer the future demands, either of the home or foreign markets. The following document gives an insight into how matters stood as to the Bute fishings for some years previous to 1765, and, it is certainly curious and valuable, as it shows what could

not be done in modern times; a nett profit for nine successive years of about from £15 to £18 per boat.

Years.	Number of Boats.	Nett Profit.
1749	86	£1299 17 8
1750	97	1733 4 7
1751	127	1609 10 4
1752	149	2028 9 2
1753	143	1955 7 6
1754	138	1749 9 2
1755	75	93 8 6
1756	119	1533 14 7
1757	133	2433 18 9

A fleet of about 600 boats or upwards were frequently found together in the Frith of Clyde, but, for many years past, the herrings have ceased to visit the inlets in that Frith or but very partially.

In the year 1763, the town of Rothsay contained but few inhabitants, and about thirty open boats were fitted out from thence to the fishing. The inhabitants from their knowledge of fishing herrings, and their attention and perseverance continued gradually to extend their trade and became possessed of a considerable number of vessels, when an unfortunate stop to the regular payment of the bounties took place. This obliged some who had begun the business to withdraw from it; however, the greater part of the people by their laudable and industrious exertions were able to go on and to continue the trade with some little advantage to themselves. Their number of vessels increasing, much pains were taken in the improvement of their nets, and specimens were brought from different countries most noted for net-making in order to make trials, and that the people

might imitate in the material and construction, those which should be found best suited for their purpose. Herein they had great success and continued to make considerable quantities of nets upon an improved plan, not for their own use only, but have at times been able to spare to others. Many disasters were experienced by the adventurers both by shipwreck and otherwise; still, however, the diligence, sobriety, economy, and spirit of the people enabled them to get forward, insomuch, that in the year 1800, the number of vessels or busses fitted out that year was ninety, amounting to 5000 tons, with upwards of 1000 men, completely equipped with nets, &c. The cure that season amounted to upwards of 50,000 barrels derived from a perseverence in the business when adventurers in other places were under the necessity of withdrawing from the fishing. The Rothsay adventurers continued to persevere for eight or ten years in the same way, but the fishing becoming less prosperous and the withdrawing of the tonage bounty under which busses were formerly fitted out, a few of the fish curers lost the greater part of their capital, and also some of their vessels employed in the coasting trade which they were unable to replace. Still the greater number of curers continued the business by freighting vessels, shipping salt, and barrels, and purchased herrings from the fishermen employed in the various fishing lochs on the west and north coast of Scotland, and also on the coasts of Orkney and Shetland.

In later years, however, from the declined demand for herrings in the Clyde and London, for export to the West Indies, and from the gradual fall-

ing off of the consumpt in Ireland, the adventurers in the fishery found the business not only to be a losing one, but to some of them, who could not well bear a series of losses, altogether ruinous. Rothsay has therefore ceased to be the place it once was in this branch of commerce, and there now but remain a few parties established there, and those principally visiting Orkney in the season and curing there more or less as circumstances may warrant.

LOCH FYNE.

IT is not within the province of this work to treat of the romantic and beautiful scenery of the Western Highlands, and, indeed, from the thousands who annually crowd the decks of the numerous steamers to this favoured part of Scotland, and from the many descriptive guide books, any attempt in the way of writing in praise of what has become generally known, would be out of place. That long and interesting arm of the sea, Loch Fyne, must therefore here be noticed only in its riches of the finny tribe. In this it is pre-eminent. Its herring fishery has long been famed, and with the mention of a Loch Fyne herring, is associated the idea of a delicacy of a rare kind. From 500 to 600 boats are frequently collected in a season, and extending as far south as Campbelton. The amount of catch may be taken, on an average, every year, at 20,000 barrels; and so much is the fish esteemed and

sought after, that the whole amount of produce may be said to be consumed in the neighbouring and populous city of Glasgow. It is a remarkable fact that Loch Fyne herrings are sold by retail, in that city, by the weight and not by the piece, a custom both indicating their superior value, and one which can be mentioned of no other locality.

In this way, a barrel of them finds vent amongst all classes of the inhabitants, according to the season and the quantity at market, at a price of from £2 to £4. The Loch fishing can be more steadily persevered in, than that on the east coast of Scotland from the absence of that boisterous weather which interferes with industry on the wide ocean; and though not without its labour and occasional hardship, is yet free from much of the danger, always awaiting those who ply their oar on the inconstant waves of the North sea. To show more distinctly the value of the Western fishings, and that their great consumption lies in the home trade, recourse may be had to the following statistics. In the year 1847, over the districts of Campbelton and Islay, Dumfries and Stranraer, Glasgow, Greenock, and Ayr, Inverary and Lochgilphead, Loch Broom, Lochs Curron and Dunvegan, Loch Shilday and Rothsay, there were, of boats, 4283, manned by 13,766 fishermen, 266 coopers, of those employed in gutting, packing, cleaning, and drying the fish, 6738, and of people employed altogether, 21,481. In that year, at the above stations, were cured, gutted and ungutted, 51,192 barrels of herrings. Of these were exported, 3648 barrels, leaving for home consumption, 47,544 barrels. None were branded.

At these stations, in addition, were caught and taken to market, or sold in a fresh condition, 33,450 barrels. Of cod, ling, or hake, at the above stations, in the year, 1847, were cured dried, 15,247 cwts. and cured in pickle, 1024 barrels. None came under the official brand. Of these, were exported to Ireland, 3972 cwts. and to places out of Europe, 272 cwts. in a dried state; total, 4244 cwts. exported, leaving for home consumption, 11,003 cwts.

In addition to those localities, of which a short notice has been given, and from which, on the east of Scotland, the foreign trade is principally if not wholly carried on, the coast is studded with stations of rather lesser note. On the Caithness coast, there is Lybster, where a new harbour has been lately erected at the expense of the proprietor, J. F. Sinclair, Esq., sufficient to contain in its present state, 150 boats, besides the vessels required for conveying fishery stock, and the produce to market. It is perfectly safe for small vessels, and capable of improvement on a large scale. Latheron Wheel is another excellent fishing station, the property of Captain Dunbar. It has about forty boats. A considerable sum has been laid out by the proprietor in building a breakwater which has been found of much advantage In this district lie also the romantic station of Clyth and that of Occumster. The number of boats fishing at these is about fifty. The harbour of Clyth is not safe even in ordinary storms, its ex-

posure being directly south-east, and the capacity small. It has a depth of water—spring tide, twelve feet, and neap, eight and nine. It was erected about twenty-eight years ago, by the late Dr. Henderson, then tacksman of Clyth, at his own expense. Occumster is a later erection; it is not yet completed, but when so, it may be able to contain about seventy boats, and will prove much safer for vessels frequenting the coast in the fishing business. These places are the property of Sir George Sinclair, Bart. of Ulbster.

The town of Thurso on the north coast of Caithness has never arrived at great celebrity as a fishing station; and in the present day and for years back, there has been little or nothing done worth mentioning. The harbour is not commodious, and perhaps the fishing ground is not altogether favourable from its being at the entrance into the Pentland Frith, where an exposure to the rapid tides may interfere with the successful prosecution of the fishery. Along the north coast of Sutherland all the way to Cape Wrath are many creeks where the herring fishery has been partially prosecuted during the last twenty to thirty years, though latterly the spirit for the enterprize has much broken down. Under encouraging circumstances there could not be a more promising locality than the Rabbit Islands at Tongue. Within the islands is a fine, well sheltered, small bay, where vessels may ride in perfect safety, and on the shores of which, the curing can be carried on to every advantage. At the station of Rispond, there has been also, in days gone by, a good deal done in the fishery by one or two enterprizing individuals.

In the south-east of Scotland are the two considerable stations of Berwick and Dunbar. At both places a heavy shoal of herrings generally strikes in, in the months of August or September. There is not that regular fishing which is in the north country; and the consumption of herrings is mostly in the neighbouring markets and country, in a fresh condition, or the fish is made up for smoking. At both Dunbar and Berwick, the French luggers do a large business annually in the purchase of fresh herrings direct from the fishermen. The port of Leith, in former days, was the great depôt for herrings collected there from various parts of the coast previous to export. It still possesses a certain share of business of the same kind, and, in the preparation of red herrings, in dried cod and ling, and in smoked haddocks, the business is extensive. Several parties maintain respectable establishments, such as Messrs. Robertson & Son, Messrs. Adamson, and others. Here is the head establishment of Mr. Jas. Methuen. Mr. Methuen is more deeply and extensively engaged in the white fishing business than any other in Scotland. In the herring fishery he has numerous stations around the coast, having annually under engagement to him, in July and August, several hundred fishermen, exclusive of his purchases during other months of the year; and having also a large trade in cod, ling, and haddock. At the neighbouring fishing village to Leith of Newhaven, there is every year a large fleet of boats fitted out in the best and fullest manner for the herring fishing. They set sail about the middle of July, for the distant port of Wick; remaining there until the last day of August.

when they again weigh anchor for home. In the Frith of Forth there is an autumn and a winter fishing, in which the various small towns partake, from Anstruther to Burntisland. At Burntisland, there has been, for many years, a persevering and very considerable prosecution of the red herring business. In the Frith of Forth fishings, the fisherman enter into no regular engagements, but dispose of their catch at the price of the day; the price varying with the success—and the fish going into immediate consumption, either fresh or smoked, few or none being made up for exportation.

The large populous and flourishing town of Dundee has properly speaking no fishing of its own, but there are several first-rate establishments for the manufacture of red herrings. The Messrs. Davidson have for many many years been located there and at Wick. They are engaged chiefly in the home trade, and in every department of the cure the most exact attention is applied, so that the town of Dundee and surrounding country have the best quality of this, to a manufacturing population, almost necessary article of food. The town of Montrose has also no herring fishery, but its character for pickled cod, smoked haddocks, and smoked herrings, has long been established in the London market; cod and haddock are plentifully caught on its coast. Mr. Thomas Napier has for many years there taken a lead in the business with a perseverance and skill worthy of any branch of manufacture. The herrings are taken round, in vessels engaged by the month, from Peterhead and Fraserburgh. The export of fish from Montrose to the southern markets is constant and must amount

per annum to a large sum in value. At the small port of Stonehaven there has been a herring fishery for some years past, but not on a large scale, the principal part being carried to Aberdeen; however, Stonehaven contains a snug little harbour, suitable in every way for the prosecution of the business. At Aberdeen, an attempt within the last few years was made to establish a herring fishery, but without that success which warranted a farther perseverance, and it has again died away. This trading city has a less share in the Scottish fisheries as a place of manufacture than its neighbours; whilst, at the same time, there is not a better supplied market, for the various kinds of white fish from the ocean for the use of its inhabitants, in the North of Scotland. On the south side of the Murray Frith there are various other smaller stations for the herring fishery, where the cure is chiefly made up for the Baltic, and which may be with propriety mentioned. There is a new harbour erection at Pituly, close to Fraserburgh, the property of Sir John Forbes of Pitsligo. Farther on there is the old small town of Rosehearty, the property of Alex. D. Fordyce, Esq.; Pennan, belonging to Sir Charles Forbes; then Gardenstown, much famed for its successful fishings, on the estate of the Gardens of Troup; and Whitehills, a little west of Banff, on the Seafield property—all sending their quota to sea in the season, and in number from twenty to fifty boats each.

Having noticed most of the localities on our coasts where the fishery is prosecuted, it will not be out of place to bring before the public, what may go fairly under the name of the metropolitan district of

fishermen—a district of the first importance in the labour of the mine—a nursery for the past for hardy and skilful men, and for the future to be depended on for a supply of those sons of Britain, who are found on board her wooden walls, carrying her proud flag into every sea, fearless in the hour of danger, and ever ready when England expects each man to do his duty. Within a short distance of four miles, on the south coast of the Murray Frith, is found the residence of about twelve hundred strong skilful fishermen, who, with their families, it may be imagined form the nucleus of no trifling population. Buckie is the chief, with its 174 boats of largest size, and their united crews of 700 men. Next is Portknockie, with its 90 boats and 400 men; then Portessie, 54 boats and 200 men; Findochty, 40 boats and 160 men; and Portgordon, 40 boats and 160 men. Harbours for navigation being wanting, all proceed annually north, south, east, and west, for the eight weeks of the herring fishery—wives and children—bag and baggage. Buckie is the property of Colonel Gordon of Cluny, and Sir William Gordon of Letterfoury. Portknockie belongs to the Earldom of Seafield.

PRESENT STATE, COMPREHENDING DETAILS IN EVERY DEPARTMENT OF MANUFACTURE.

AS to the Scottish Fisheries at the present day, reference may be best briefly made, in their numerical amount of men, of money, and of material, to the last Report of the Commissioners of British Fisheries. This annual document it would be unfair not freely to confess to be of much statistical importance. It is here given that the capital employed in boats, nets, and lines is the not inconsiderable one of £1,267,735, being an increase on the former year of £11,687; that the value of nets alone is £489,872, being an increase over the former year of £16,127 10s.—amounting in square yards in the herring fishery to 98,580,218; that the value of lines used is £101,706, being an increase on the former year of £2,796. The tonnage of boats employed in the herring, cod, and ling fisheries is given at tons 127,479, being a decrease on the former year of tons 1,430; and their value at £676,157, being a decrease of £7,237. It is given that there are 15,279 boats, 61,257 fishermen and boys, and altogether 99,397 persons employed in the fisheries; differing but little in number from that of the previous year. The total quantity of herrings caught in 1847, coming under

the cognizance of the Board, was barrels 562,743½, being a decrease on the former year of the quantity cured of 44,707½ barrels. To this has to be added a very large quantity over which there is unfortunately no statistical information, namely, what may have been used for immediate consumption, and a portion of that valuable part of the trade which may have been made red or smoked, amounting to barrels 332,197. There is a small decrease on the quantity taken, from that of the previous year given in the report, of barrels 33,901½, but it may not unfairly be supposed that the catch of 1846 and 1847 had been nearly equal. The Scottish herring fishery for the year 1847 may be said to have produced 900,000 barrels, and in a good year's fishing to comprehend one million of barrels, with a value, at a fair rate, of little less than a million pounds sterling.

In another important branch of the Scottish fisheries, namely, the cod and ling, it is found by the Report, that the total quantity caught in 1847 was, number of fish taken, 2,816,734; cured dried, 4331 tons 4 cwt.; pickled, barrels 6,247½; otherwise sold or consumed, 16,335 tons 6 cwt.; grand total of the cod and ling fishery, tons 20,686½. The value of the dried cod may be taken, at £15 per ton, to be £64,965; of the pickled, at 20s. per barrel, £6,247; of the immense quantity unaccounted for, no fair value can be given, but it cannot be less, even at £10 per ton, than above £160,000.

One favourable consideration attends the herring, cod, and ling fishery is that in the general character of the cure it equals that of any former period. The different operations of packing, gutting, salting, and

selecting the fish are carried on with assiduous attention. Any buyer, foreign or home, can have his supplies made up in the exact manner to suit the markets for which they are intended.

As to the present state of our salmon and haddock fisheries, no proper criterion of their value, from want of statistical data, can be formed. That of the salmon must be very great. In the year 1824 it is supposed that about 200,000 fish reached the metropolis, and in ten years after four and a half millions of lbs. From increased population it must now be much greater, and though the above supposition embraces the fishing going to London from every quarter, yet, at the periods quoted, a large proportion was from Scotland. The salmon fishing is protected by a close season, and in Scotland, in the months of October, November, December, and January, any attempt to fish is illegal and severely punishable. The value of the Scotch river fishings has been much on the decrease. The Tweed and the Spey were the most valuable, but the proprietors must, in these days of bag-net and stake-fishings, be suffering under a great reduction of rental; and in which the tacksmen, under leases which have been for some years entered upon, must also largely participate. Rumours have been afloat that government had some legislative measure in view, as to the rights of sea fishings, for the purpose of better equalizing the value between them and the river; and certainly as the rivers are a necessity for the habits of the fish, it is but reasonable that too great a preponderance in worth should not attach itself to one, to the serious, and indeed, in many instances, ruinous injury of the other. The

Messrs. Hogarth of Aberdeen have for many years, on the east coast of Scotland, been known as the most extensive tacksmen of river fishings, and they have of late years entered with equal spirit into those of the sea or coast.

BOATS FOR THE HERRING FISHERY.

It is most undoubtedly desirable that in every undertaking, the means should be adequate to the end.

In the Scotch herring fishery, as in every other, the suitableness of the boats is a matter of the first consequence. The build of boat should embrace as far as possible the safety of the men and fitness for the capture of the fish. On our stormy coast there has, alas, been too many melancholy instances of loss of life in the herring fishery. Much inquiry in the general mind has therefore been excited, as to whether a better construction of boat might enable fishermen to avoid some of those heart-breaking casualties ever happening from time to time. Perhaps, however, on impartial consideration, the boats in their greatest number will be found, as the result of the experience of the fishermen themselves, the nearest to the best plan and size of build for the purpose required.

The Scottish is a land or shore fishery. The boats leave the harbours towards evening, and the fishermen expect, with favourable wind and weather, to return from four to six o'clock on the following

morning. Indeed, when they return at a later hour, it is ever on the side of disadvantage to the curers. A curer who is zealous in his business will always express his satisfaction when he has the fish in salt by the breakfast hour of nine.

The largest size of boats at present in use, is known by being either south built or west built. Those of the south build have the preference on the coast to the south of Banff, and those of the west build are found west from Banff as far as Portmahommack. The boats built at Wick are after the south construction. They are all open boats. At the port of Peterhead, where there is a good deal done in boat-building and on an improved model, the size is, length of keel, thirty-four feet; above, thirty-seven and a half feet; and breadth amidships, thirteen feet seven inches. These boats are capable of bringing to land from eighty to one hundred crans of herrings. The boats built at Cullen on the west construction will carry about the same quantity of fish. The difference in model lies principally in the stern or after end of the boat. That part in the west or scarf, or Buckie boat, has a much greater breadth and roundness than the other. It is difficult to declare which of them may be the better for sea-worthiness, but, it may be that the Buckie boat has the advantage in a practical and very necessary part of the work, namely, a greater convenience in the proper shaking of the net as the fish are hauled on board. The harbours all along the coast being tidal, the size of boat is fully adequate to the convenience afforded in depth of water. For the purpose of cure, the size of boat serves every end. A daily average catch of

from six to eight crans from each boat can be best taken care of, and no curer, had he it in his choice, would ever like to receive from each of his boats in one morning heavier shots than from ten to twenty crans. When boats arrive heavily laden with herrings, the work of cure cannot be completed until a late hour in the day, which must ever less or more prove detrimental to the quality of the fish. For rowing in calms, which must attend the proper working of a shore fishery, the labour arising from the present size of boat, for a crew of four or five men, could not be increased. For the varied work appertaining to the catch when at sea, the boat of the usual dimensions must be an open one. All the room which can be given by clearness from hindrance and from openness is required. None but a practical fisherman can be aware of the room and convenience necessary to the work of shooting and hauling of the net. This has frequently to be practised more than once in one night, and the ground shifted for a better chance. In hauling, as thus described, the swing rope is first untied and brought aft to near the stern. On the appearance of the first net, it is laid hold of by the upper and lower baulks brought in over the gunwale and shaken of the fish, which are thrown out easier when alive than when dead. A net charged with live herrings may be brought by a slight pull to the surface of the water, which, if dead, the men would be quite unable to raise. On arriving at the fishing ground, ascertained by the bearing of landmarks, the masts and oars are stowed away, and a space cleared away for casting out the nets, at first lying in midships. The worst nets are first put out.

Two men cast them over whilst the other two row the boat. The first net being shot, the ties of the second are fastened to it, and so on till the whole are in the sea. The boat in the meantime is moving across the tide, and the whole fleet is stretching behind to a distance of six to eight hundred yards. The tie of the last net is made fast to the small hauser or swing rope, and then the boat rides away as if seemingly at anchor, though at her drift slowly through the water. There cannot be finer sea-going craft than the largest size of herring boats. With the skill of four or five thoroughbred fishermen and plenty of sea-room in the worst of weather, there is little danger on board.

Sometimes indeed a loss ensues, when the storm breaks suddenly out and the nets are heavily laden with fish; but once under weigh and the chance of safety returns. In a dark tempestuous night, however, on our rocky and iron bound coast, it cannot be wondered that the crew should run for life and property to the land. It is then when the danger begins. The awfulness of the scene around invests the mind with the desire for shelter and protection, too strong to be refused in the attempt. It is then in the regaining and at the entrance of our harbours, where we have so frequently to lament the fate of our brave fishermen. It is on the coasts of Aberdeenshire and of Caithness where the scenes of melancholy recollection chiefly dwell. Had the boats a Cromarty to run for, it would be a different matter. To boats, for many miles on the coast, Cromarty forms a natural harbour of refuge, and all within its range in stormy weather, can pursue their avocation with

pleasurable feelings of comparative security and hope. The conclusion is natural, to a reflective mind, of the wisdom and the mercy in erecting, by the hands of man, harbours of refuge where nature, though otherwise bountiful in gifts, has denied them. The Scottish fishing has no similitude with that of Norway or Holland. In Norway, it is in the calm of the small land locked bays, or arms of the sea running far into the land, where the fisherman pursues his toil during every hour, removed from the danger or the fear of the mighty ocean. From Holland, again, it is a deep-sea fishing, and the vessels of from fifty to sixty tons, with all appurtenances belonging to that size of craft; curing on board and casting the net with the same freedom, fifty or a hundred miles from the land, as at ten. In enlarging the Scottish boats, in furnishing them with a larger crew and more material, in enabling them under the protection of decks and hatches to stay longer at sea, and to accomplish a heavier catch, the nature, character, and usages of the land or shore fishery are forsaken, and a difference thus in circumstance must demand an alteration in the management and direction of the fishery which is not now in contemplation, and which a capital invested in property of boats of £600,000 would forbid for many years to come, even should speculation in this day of enterprise venture on the trial.

ENGAGEMENT OF BOATS FOR THE HERRING FISHERY.

SINCE the year 1815, and very probably at an earlier period, there has existed a clause in the engagement between curers and fishermen, which though originating in supposed good policy, should at the present day be taken into serious consideration, as to whether, for the benefit of the fishery, it should not be altered. As uncertainty must ever hang over, in a greater or less degree, every fishing enterprize, whether the adventure be for the whale, the cod, the haddock, or the herring, so the rate of reward for the labour, the skill, and the capital should be measured and divided in a ratio based on the success. The objectionable clause is that binding for 200 crans per boat. On inquiry, why 200 crans came to be the maximum engagement, it will be found that the bounty system was its parent. The calculation was most adroitly gone into, for the purpose of securing the whole bribe which government held out. It was clearly for the advantage of the curer, to name in his bargain, the quantity which, in probability, might be taken. The period of fishing, fully to cover the season, has been eight weeks, and for the laborious toil, this time has ever been found extended enough. In each week there are five fishing nights; so that altogether there are forty, deducting one night in each week for bad weather; on an average, there remain thirty-two nights. If an average amount of moderate success for each night be taken, at six crans, there will be a produce of 192 crans. Thus,

200 crans per boat being the agreement, there was every fair reason to believe, that the bounty on every barrel taken, would reach the pocket of the curer. Since the year 1830, however, the above motive of agreement has been removed. The continuance of the clause in question, there cannot be a doubt, has, for many past years, operated injuriously. Taking an average amount of success along our coasts at 130 crans per boat, it is for all having their capital invested to reflect, whether that average should not be the quantity agreed upon, and the balance of the catch for the eight weeks paid for, at the price of the day. It must be readily granted that, between the average catch of 130 crans, and the 200 crans agreed upon, the capital of the curer has to fill up the blank occasioned by a falling market, and that whilst there may be a little or no margin left for profit, there may be a large one for loss. With success, and with want of success in the catch, it is desirable that supply and demand should regulate as nearly as possible the value of the cure. Experience, also, now tells the curer that he cannot obtain the same price for the lank and for the *full* herring, and as a general rule it may be expected that more of the inferior quality will be brought on shore in the second hundred crans than in the first, the spawning time falling rather towards the end of the fishing. This contemplated alteration would operate equally in favour and in equity to the fishermen as to the curer. In seasons of success, the quality at a less price would bring proportionate remuneration, and in times of scarcity, the extra demand would fill up the loss of quantity, and thus, markets could be better managed,

and room given for a scale of rise and fall, which is negatived by the present contract of 200 crans per boat, such being above the average amount of catch.

TIME OF ENGAGING BOATS FOR THE HERRING FISHERY.

ONE element in the unprofitably carrying on of the herring fishery lies in the engaging the boats at too long a time previous to the season of active operation. Thinking men must know this well from many lessons of experience. The spring-time would always be found early enough; the risk of casualty attending the business from a previous November or December should not be submitted to on the part of the curer. It is an erroneous transaction and brings a very weighty addition to the speculative nature of the trade, for under every prudence some share of speculation, as indeed to every business, will attach itself to it. It is an opinion which will not be contradicted, that the time to enter into contracts for the following fishing, for the best interest of all parties, should be the months of March or April. There is a Norwegian winter fishing, the success of which it would be well for curers always to ascertain previous to engagements. The Norwegian catch finds its way wholly into the Baltic. The curer should lay hold of every proper data at his command for calculation as to the worth of the raw material, for he must well know, that on this depends his chance of a suc-

be overlooked By a looker-on, the work may seem distasteful, and even to a degree disagreeable. It is, however, healthy, and those engaged in it are full of cheerfulness and good humour. Their happy feelings on the morning of a successful catch, are expressed by the merry laugh and harmless joke. Though during the week, the fashion of the toil brings their apparel to the plainest standard, yet, on one of the seven, there is none more gay than the young lass, to whom the world is much indebted for the taste and flavour of a salted herring.

The gutting and packing begins, or ought to do so, with the delivery of the fish from the boats. There are three qualities of fish for selection, whilst the gutting is proceeding with, the malties or young growing fish, the full grown, and the spent or spawned herring. Fish broken, bruised, or torn in the belly, are also packed separately. There is a good deal of art in the nice gutting of a herring. The orifice made by the knife should be as small as possible. The incision is made in the throat to the back bone, and the hand is turned upwards, so that as little of the seemly look of the fish is lost as possible. The blood must flow freely from the great blood vessels. The gut, liver, stomach, and gills, must all be taken out. It is approved of in the continental markets that the crown gut should remain. Packing is also a particular operation. It goes on at the same time with the gutting. The proportion of salt must be guided a little by circumstances, but must never be over much; as a general calculation, of common Liverpool salt, it may be given at a bushel and a half for each barrel. Previous to being packed, much de-

pends upon the fish being well worked in the rousing tubs. For the Irish and home market, the most suitable package is laying the fish flat on their sides; for the continental, on their backs. Both gutting and packing, when the premises will admit, should be conducted under cover, but at all events, when the barrels are packed, every necessary precaution should be used to secure the fish from the influence of the sun, or the injurious effects of rain. For the work on a barrel of bung-packed herrings, the women are paid with eightpence.

COOPERING.

THE duties of coopers, it is almost unnecessary to remark, in the cure of fish must be of the first consequence. In the making of the package there is the legal size to be attended to; the barrels have to be of the most suitable quality of wood and well seasoned. For the pickled fish, it is of course of first necessity that their tightness should preserve the original pickle, and a close overlook must be constantly given to see that this is the case. The cooper, indeed, has the whole process under his care. He must see that the gutting knives are in good order, in fact, keep a strict superintendence over gutters and packers in all their operations. After two or three days have been allowed the herrings to pine, his attention has to be given that the barrels be filled up of the same quality of fish, and then he

has to see that at the date they are ripe enough to be bung-packed, every care is given in drawing off the pickle and in the final filling up, and making in every way ready for the market for which the article is intended.

The general employment of the cooper is in barrel making, which in the trussing of the hoops is laborious. He can earn wages at the rate of 2s. 6d. to 3s. per day. During the eight weeks of the fishing, the cooper has frequently to encounter much fatigue. His weekly wages are then from 16s. to 18s., and a man of steady active habits, with a knowledge of his business, is always in request.

REPACKING OF HERRINGS.

THE repacking means a preparation for a warm climate. There is not now much done in this branch. The herrings are emptied out of the original package into tubs of clean fresh water, washed, and then weighed into parcels of 224 pounds each. The fish are then repacked with a proportion of Liverpool great salt between each tier into the same barrels. What is wanting in fish to fill the barrel is made up with great salt, and after being properly headed up and bound with iron hoops, the barrel receives a sufficient quantity of pickle made from clean salt.

SMOKING OF THE HERRING.

THE smoking or manufacture of red herrings has long been a favourite mode of preparation, and perhaps in England and Scotland there are not less than two to three hundred thousand barrels in this way going into consumption. For this purpose the herring is left ungutted. After being properly roused and packed into barrels, the fish is allowed to remain forty-eight hours. They are then put into the steep, being clean washed with fresh water, after which, they are spitted and hung up, and permitted to remain in smoke with a varied degree of heat about thirty hours, for London and the southern markets of England; and when dried for home winter use, they are about three weeks. About one bushel of salt per barrel will be the quantity used for the making of reds. Much nicety and carefulness is requisite in the selection of the fish after they are smoked, and every attention must be given that the first quality are assorted by themselves—that those who are at all injured are packed by themselves—and that the refuse, or the third and worst quality, be also kept separate. There is a good deal of acquired skill necessary in sending red herrings to market in prime condition.

ICEING OF THE SALMON.

It is mentioned, that about the year 1785, the packing of Salmon in ice was first resorted to, and from that period the metropolis has been favoured with a continued supply of fresh fish. Steam navigation has brought also its aid in effecting a change on distance, and is now the active agent which gives to the inhabitants of London, the finest salmon, and in the primest of condition. The salmon is packed in large wooden boxes, of about one cwt. each, and are covered with ice in a pounded state. The fish are calculated to be preserved thus, for eight to ten days, and in the height of summer, when the weather is at the warmest, six to eight. Every proprietor or tacksman of fishings, has his ice house, where in winter the stock is laid in, in sufficient quantity for the season. He has also his required number of long wooden boxes, which are regularly returned, and, in this simple manner, those living at 500 miles distance are equally as well supplied, and oftentimes better, with fresh salmon, than those living in the neighbourhood of the fishing.

PICKLING OF THE SALMON.

The pickling of salmon is not now so much resorted to in the north of Scotland as in former days; indeed very little, comparatively speaking, is now made

up in this way. During Lent, however, in the metropolis it is still considered a delicacy, and where there is a want of the kind, a supply will always follow from some quarter. In pickling, the water being at the boiling point, salmon are allowed to boil half an hour, and grilses twenty minutes. The fish is then allowed to lie and cool for a night, when it is then packed in kits. These are filled up with strong vinegar, with about a gallon to each kit, and in each kit there is a weight of fish of about twenty-five pounds.

SMOKING OF THE HADDOCK.

WHEN haddocks are delivered from the boats, being gutted, cleaned, and split up, they are allowed to remain three to four hours in pickle; they are then spitted and hung up in the smoking house. Immediately after the herring fishery, when the haddocks are rich and fat, for the London and southern markets, they require to hang about eight days in the smoke—but later in the season only three. At Portmahommack, a principal haddock smoking station of the Messrs. Hogarth, a process has been discovered, connected with steam, by that firm, which enables the time for smoking to be shortened, and which will give the advantage of a speedier export to market, most desirable in an article of food suitable only for immediate consumption. At Portnockie there are now four smoking houses for had-

docks; at Findochty, three; at Porteasy, two; and at Buckie, eight. The price paid has been, in the present season, eleven shillings and sixpence for a hundred and fifty-four fish. At Burghead, the price paid has been four shillings per cwt. of fish from the boats; and the average success per day of each boat from six to ten cwt.; thus giving some idea of the value of this rising branch in fishing adventure.

CURING OF COD, LING, OR HAKE.

THE bleeding of the fish should take place as soon after being caught as possible; indeed when it can be done on being taken off the hook so much the better. After the fish is bled, and the bone removed, and all impurities removed by being thoroughly washed, they are carried into vats, tubs, or troughs. In these they are salted, and carefully laid in layers. About fifty pounds of Liverpool common salt is used to the hundred pound weight. Oversalting is injurious, it does not increase the weight, but extracts the sap, and renders the fish consequently lighter. Fresh fish will take in no more salt than will perfectly cure them. When the fish are removed from the vats, in which they are permitted to remain for three days, another thorough washing takes place, and the pickle is well brushed out. They are then built in a long pile on a stony beach, so placed that there is a hanging towards the tail to allow the salt water to be properly dripped.

In a couple of days they may be laid out to dry. The best mode of drying cod is on flakes of wood, raised on posts about three feet high, of any suitable length, and about four feet wide. At the top there is a platform of cross bars, six inches asunder, and on which the fish are laid. When a stony beach is used, which it is for the most part, if indeed not universally in Scotland, the fish must not be laid down in the heat of the sun, as the stones may be too warm; indeed, for the first few days a powerful sun must be avoided. Too hastily drying must be guarded against. At first the fish are laid on their backs; and afterwards, alternately on their back and belly. To turn them frequently is advantageous. During the night, when they are gathered into heaps, they must be covered as well as in the damp weather, when they cannot be upon the beach. In a fortnight the fish is ready to be packed for sweating. This endures for twelve days, when another week's drying takes place. They are then sweated a second time for a few days, in a pile or stack, and then another few days' drying suffices to complete the cure. The state of the weather must, however, be the guide to the curer. The time occupied in curing will be six to eight weeks, be the weather favourable or otherwise. One of the most important parts of the cure is the sweating of the fish. After the completion of the cure, the housing must be looked particularly after. They require to be put into a dry storehouse, and brought together either in the cool of the morning or evening.

Cod fish cured in pickle may remain the same time in the vats previous to being repacked into

the barrels. When taken from the vats they are then brushed, scrubbed, well scraped with a knife, and washed with clean water. This being done, the repacking with clean salt into barrels goes on, and they are thus made ready for sale. The allowance for cure of pickled fish per barrel is about eighty-four pounds for home consumption, and about 112 pounds for exportation. Of cod, ling, or hake, in a dried state, there is always a difference of value in the difference of cure; and, therefore, it is essential that those engaged in this branch of commerce should adopt the mode most recommended and approved of in the country for which the article is intended. In addition to the value of the cod, as an article of cure and of food, must not be forgotten its worth in commerce in the oil extracted from the liver, the ton of which sells at about £23; the quantity of which collected in Scotland and particularly in Shetland, comes, in its aggregate, to a large amount. Also, in these later times deserves to be mentioned the growing use of cod-liver oil in its more refined state, as a valuable medicine, and now much sought after for the cure of various disorders.

MODE OF FISHING FOR SALMON, COD, AND HADDOCK.

FOR the catch of the salmon there are various modes in different localities and in different countries. The common way in Scotland, in rivers, is with a net

dropped into the water, from the stern of a boat called a coble, as it is rowed away from the river bank. Men stand at the shallow parts of the river and watch the salmon as they swim up; when a fish is observed, the signal is given and the capture is certain. The boat is immediately rowed off, the net being attached one end to the boat and the other to the end of a rope left with the man on the shore. In certain parts of a river there are what are called cruives. Dams are built across the stream, and those cruives or weirs are placed in the dam wall. As the fish on their journey up the water enter these spaces, through which the water runs, they are prevented from returning by a grating of a particular contrivance—they can neither swim back nor get out. In the sea fishing there is the bag-net and the stake fishing. Of the latter, the distance between high and low water-mark, on the shore, is where the stakes are placed. The shallow extremity of the net is fixed to the stakes, placed at high-water mark, the deepest, at low water-mark. The fish swimming along shore, and striking against any part of the net, are led by its form into what are named the chambers, and from this there is no escape. The bag-net is of another description, placed in deep water on the coast, generally not far from the mouth of a river or fresh water stream. In these a great many fish are taken, but the chief inconvenience is that they are liable, in every storm, to be injured or swept away; and the utmost attention must be given in their protection to the state of the weather.

The capture of the cod-fish is by hooks and lines. The following is quoted from Yarrell's able work on

British Fishes :—"Two sorts of lines adapted for two different modes of fishing are in common use. One mode is by deep-sea lines, called bulters, on the Cornish coast; these are long lines, with hooks fastened at regular distances along their whole length by shorter and smaller cords called snoods. The snoods are six feet long each, and placed on the long line twelve feet from each other, to prevent the hooks becoming entangled.

"Near the hooks these shorter lines or snoods are formed of separate threads, loosely fastened together, to guard against the teeth of the fish. Some variations occur, at different parts of the coast, as to the number of hooks attached to the line, as well as in the length of the snood; but the distance on the long line between two snoods is always double the length of the snood itself. Buoys, buoy-ropes, and and anchors or grapples are fixed one to each end of the long line; the hooks are baited with sandlaunce, limpet, whelk, &c. The lines are always laid, or, as it is termed, shot across the tide; for, if the tide runs upon the end of the line it will force the hooks together, by which the whole tide's fishing is irrecoverably lost; they are deposited generally about the time of slack water between each ebb and flow, and are taken up, or hauled for examination, after being left about six hours or one flood or ebb. An improvement upon this more common plan was some years ago suggested by Mr. Cobb, who was sent to the Shetlands by the Commissioners appointed for the improvement of the fisheries. He fixed a small piece of cork within a certain distance of the hook, about twelve inches, which suspended and floated the

bait, so as to prevent its falling on the ground; by which method, the bait was more freely shown to the fish, by the constant and variable motion produced upon it by the tide. In the old way, the bait was frequently hid from the fish by being covered with seaweed, or was consumed by some of the numerous star-fish and crabs that infest the ground."

The fishing for the haddock is also by hook and line. On the north-east of Scotland, the largest size of herring boats is also used for the cod and haddock fishing, but they are then manned with nine men instead of four or five. In the present season, in the district from Buckie to Portgordon, in the haddock fishery there have been employed about eighty-two boats, with crews in the aggregate of 7 or 800 men.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE VARIOUS PRODUCE OF OUR SEAS.

IN giving a short description of the fish which more particularly enrich our shores, it is not intended to interfere with the task of the naturalist. So much has already been written by authors of esteemed celebrity, that, it is almost unnecessary to remark, any thing that is new cannot be written. However, in a work of this kind, a few pages dedicated to illustrating the habits of some of the families of the finny tribe, the author trusts will not by his readers be considered altogether out of place. Much concerned with them remains a mystery, but much that is interesting is also known. Though it is impossible to dive into the depths of the ocean, and there discover its secrets, yet practical experience has enabled man for his own use to arrive at many truths. Acting in accordance with the knowledge of these, the fishermen supplies the table with the hidden gifts of nature. The social fabric of the human family thus draws a support from the wonders of divine providence, and from day to day the baskets are replenished which have already fed millions upon millions of our race. The four species of fish, which are principally the staple of commercial transactions

on our Scottish coast, are the Salmon, the Cod, the Herring, and the Haddock; and to these alone a short notice will the more appropriately belong.

THE SALMON.

THIS fish is the inhabitant of both salt and fresh water. It is found in greater or less numbers in every river of Scotland, and along our coasts within a short distance of the land. Its natural habits require a change from the one quality of element to the other. The salmon may be said as a fish to belong to a northern latitude; it is very prolific; the ova deposited by the female are from 18 to 20,000; its growth is rapid; in March and April the ova come into life; in May it is an inch in size; in a couple of months it will be found weighing two and three pounds; and in the second year it continues growing rapidly. This fish has been known to attain the size of eighty pounds, but the average weight of salmon caught in Scotland may be given from eight to twelve pounds. By naturalists and others, many interesting circumstances are related as to the habits of the salmon not within the province of this work to repeat; and any particular description of its colour or appearance is rendered unnecessary, from its being so well known, at certain seasons, as a delicacy to the rich, and at others, as a welcome visitor at the table of the middle classes. The upper part

of the head and back is of a dark bluish black; the sides lighter, and the belly silvery white. On the upper part there are a few black spots; and there are more of them in the female than the male.

The spring fishings of good quality are small compared with that of the summer. As to its food, Dr. Knox writes, its richness of flavour is owing to the eggs of echinodesmata and some of the crustacea. Other naturalists mention that the salmon feeds on small fishes and various small marine animals. In rivers they rise freely to the artificial fly of the angler, and the clean salmon may be plentifully caught by the common earth-worm. The value of salmon certainly is less in proportion to the time it is out of water previously to its being cooked. To preserve its fine flavour in the highest degree, it cannot be eaten too fresh or too soon after it is caught. The salmon fishings around Great Britain and Ireland are most extensive, and nowhere is the value of the fish of greater importance.

THE HERRING.

THIS small yet valuable fish belongs to the genus of pilchard, sprat, shad, anchovy, and white bait. Its full grown size is nearly uniform, and in weight may average six ounces. The upper part of the body is blue and green, the belly of silvery white. Its brilliancy is best seen when hauled from the sea into the boat, and before expiring, which it immediately

does out of water. It then assumes the varied colours of the rainbow. It feeds on minute animals found in the depths of the sea. Limpets as a bait will take them; and they are said to eat the young of their own species. This fish it must readily be acknowledged is of varied quality. The herring which is caught on the Scottish coast, from the middle of June to the beginning of August, take by much the precedence in richness of condition. A barrel of them, if judged fairly, ought always, as they generally do, to bring a superior value. The herring most highly prized for home consumption is well known, as has already been mentioned, to be from Loch Fyne. Its quality, as well as that of the winter Frith of Forth and winter Norwegian, are all different from that of those paying our coasts their summer and autumnal visits. For a long time it was the received opinion that the herring was an inhabitant of the colder climates, and that the immense shoals, frequently miles in length and breadth, migrated once a-year from the northern seas. Of this migration there seemed to be annual evidence. An opinion now prevails with many that the herring does not leave the seas of its spawning, and the shores of which they periodically visit; but that they retire into the depths of the ocean until warm weather again brings them to the coast. It is possible that the herring may be a permanent inhabitant of our seas. Indeed, it is true that, in one locality or another, during the whole year, the species is to be found; but that the immense shoals of July and August continue, may be also considered problematical. The herring is very prolific, and deposits eggs

to the amount of between 3 and 4,000. There is one habit of this fish, in the absence of which would have been in a measure the non-existence of the fishery in its present condition. This important circumstance lies in the simple law of instinct, which induces the herring to rise to the surface of the water at a certain hour after sundown. During this impulse, either in search of food or for some other natural purpose, it strikes into the net, and it is then for the most part when the fisherman reaps the reward of his nightly toil. It is from this habit that much of its possession is given to man, and pending on this are the many varied wheels of industry brought into action by the enterprize. The varied success of the herring fishery arises principally from the changeable state of the weather. The usual quantity of fish is annually somewhere on the coast. This fish is remarkably organized for the supply of inland countries deprived, by distance from the ocean, of its produce in a fresh condition; it is also adapted as an article of food, as the fancy of appetite may induce, either in a raw state or in a cooked. The herring is mostly esteemed as a delicacy when it can be had fresh from the boats, and is to be enjoyed in perfection at any of the fishing stations; and, in the islands of Great Britain and Ireland, the mode of preparation for the table is by roasting or boiling. In the provinces of Germany, and, indeed, over continental Europe it is otherwise; there the cooking is dispensed with; the only part used is the back in a raw state, and when the barrel is properly packed, it gives a breadth of flesh which is highly esteemed. Early in the season, in Germany, this little fish is

eagerly sought for by the rich and great, not only as a fitting table companion to the sweet young vegetable, but is likewise held as medicinal, in the light of an alterative for the blood. The consuming price of a single herring in the month of June, at a place of entertainment, will reach as high in Berlin as half a dollar, which, at the rate of 700 fish to the barrel, would produce the pleasing price of fifty guineas.

THE COD.

THE common cod fish is perhaps as generally known as any fish caught in the wide ocean. Its quality for food is universally liked; and the enormous quantities in which it is taken renders it of great intrinsic worth. This fish is found as far north as Greenland, Iceland, and Davis Straits, and as far south as Gibraltar. On the American continent it is taken from the fortieth degree of latitude up to the sixtieth. The length of a cod fish may be given at about three feet in length, and the weight about twelve pounds. The head is large, and, with the shoulders, is in England esteemed a delicacy, more especially in the metropolis. The colour of the cod fish is, on the upper part of the head, cheeks, back, and sides, mottled and spotted of green; the belly is white. The cod fish is perhaps the most prolific of any; the extraordinary and almost inconceivable number of nine millions of ova being in the roe of one female. Cod are considered to be in the greatest perfection

in November and December. They spawn in February. The cod fish is voracious in its food, and will accept of almost any bait, feeding on various sorts of small fish, worms, limpets, whelks, &c.

THE HADDOCK.

THE haddock is also a well-known fish; it frequents the surrounding coasts of Great Britain and Ireland, but it is wanting both in the Baltic and in the Mediterranean. The length of the fish is about twenty inches. The head, cheeks, back, and upper part of the sides are of a dull greyish-white colour, and the lower part of the sides and belly are nearly white, slightly mottled with grey; the body is covered with small scales. The weight of the haddock is from two to four pounds. The food is small fish, and a favourite bait is a small piece cut from the herring. Haddocks spawn in February, and by the month of September the young have attained a considerable growth. In the months of October, November, December, and January, they are in finest condition. They swim in shoals, frequently of immense extent.

BOUNTY SYSTEM, ITS MERIT AND DEMERIT.

"Bounties on production are most commonly given in the view of encouraging the establishment of some new branch of industry; or they are intended to foster and extend a branch that is believed to be of paramount importance. In neither case, however, is their utility very obvious. In all old settled and wealthy countries, numbers of individuals are always ready to embark in every new undertaking, if it promise to be really advantageous, without any stimulus from Government, and if a branch of industry already established be really important and suitable for the country, it will assuredly be prosecuted to the necessary extent, without any encouragement other than the natural demand for its produce."

M'CULLOCH.

THE Bounty system as applied to the Scottish Fisheries was unquestionably intended to foster and extend them. Upon the whole, and looking over a long period of time, it has had the merit of tending towards their extension, at one period more than at another, and likewise in this point of view with more or less effect as the bounty was applied. Of its wisdom as a permanent good, its many instances of failure must be held as a negative. The company which was formed in 1749 for the successful prosecution of the fishery, was on a scale com-

mensurate with its patronage. The capital subscribed was £500,000. The Prince of Wales became Governor, and thirty members of the House of Commons elected as a Council. The result of its success was lamentable. In a few years not a vestige remained that such a society existed. It was founded on the bounty system. At the commencement, a bounty of thirty shillings per ton was given to every new vessel of twenty and twenty-eight tons burden; of course built for employment in the fishery, and £3 10s. was paid on every £100 employed in the fishery, and this for a period of fourteen years. In 1759, the bounty was increased to fifty shillings per ton; but all would not do. The words of that deep-thinking man, Dr. Adam Smith, may be here not unaptly quoted. He observed that the then tonnage bounty was proportioned to the burden of the ship and not to her success or skill in fishing, so that its real effect was to make ships be fitted out, not to catch herrings but to catch the bounty.

Previous to 1809, the Scottish herring fishery, as may be more particularly called a land fishery, would seem to have been inconsiderable. All that came under the report of the Fishery Board in that year, ending 5th April, 1810, amounted to 90,185 barrels; but, during the existence of the act of Parliament which then passed, and under the bounties granted by it, and for which see Appendix, the quantity increased a little, and especially that of exported fish, which, in the above year, amounted to only 38,848. In the last year of that act, or in 1814, the total quantity cured, was 110,542 barrels. In 1815, when the new act came into operation, and for which see Appendix, the total quantity caught, increased to

160,139 barrels. From this date there was a wonderful increase. In 1821, the total quantity of gutted and ungutted fish is given at 442,195 barrels; this being the year of the largest amount of bounty ever paid.

In the year ending 5th April, 1830, when the bounty altogether ceased, the total quantity under the cognizance of the officers of the fishery is found to be 329,557 barrels; from this, there is evidence that the bounty system gave a great impetus to the growth of the Scottish herring fishery. From 1830, when the bounty ceased, however, this increase has been maintained, and went on progressively, so that in the next ten years, or in 1840, there was an amount of produce from the fishery of 543,945 barrels, and in 1847, of 607,451 barrels; or nearly double the amount which came under the cognizance of the fishing board, seventeen years previous. This again proves that the fishery can well exist without bounties, and no other conclusion can be arrived at than that natural demand has been the great moving power in the increase above described. A belief of the wisdom, either in the theory or practice of bounties, has now passed away; the system will not again be resorted to, and therefore there is the less need of dwelling at greater length on the subject, at least so far as the government is concerned. The practice to which allusion must here be made is that of the bounty as between curer and fisherman. This has now continued for many years, and the fact was that the greatest part of the money paid by government found its way into the fishermen's pocket, months previous to each successive fishing, in the shape of

bribe and under the name of bounty; so that if there was an exciting expenditure on the part of government, it was equally followed up by those for whose benefit the supposed excitement was intended. These bounties have been from £10 to £15, and as high as £20, to each boat. This continues, unfortunately, in a greater or less degree to the present day; it is probable, indeed, that every curer on our coast thinks that an evil which he nevertheless persists annually in continuing. They may depend that expenditure of capital in this way is but a reckless and gambling waste of money which seldom or never returns to them. If the fishermen themselves were brought to see their own real interest, they would universally decline the bounty, and take their payment solely by the cran. Divided even as the largest sum is amongst the crew, it is capable of doing them but little good; and, at the time when received, has but too frequently been an incentive to thoughtless indulgence. "Light come, light gone," is a homely but veritable proverb; and there is another—the two bad payments—that before hand and that not at all. On the part of the curer it is unfair to his capital. In an adventure with ten boats, some will catch 50 crans, some 100 crans, some 150 crans, and some 200 crans. A bounty then of even £10 to each being given, it is clearly seen that the fish from part may be four shillings per cran, from part three shillings, and from part two shillings, dearer than that of the maximum. By legislative enactment this should be done away, and then the curers will wonder how or why their better sense could so have yielded to a false seduction. A clause in a new fishery act should

prevent the forestalling of the labour of fishermen by bribe or bounty. This will be for the real interest of fishermen, for the preservation of a large sum of capital, and it follows of course for the general welfare and bettering of commercial dealing, in this largely consumed article of food. With this pernicious payment hanging over his head, the curer never knows the cost of his cure till the end of the fishing, and labours under the uncertainty in his sales till that period arrives, arising in an imprudent outlay from which may arise an error in his calculations of from fifteen to twenty per cent.

PATRONAGE OF GOVERNMENT.

WHATEVER untoward circumstances may have in the latter years interfered with the prosperity of the Scottish fisheries, but bare justice compels the avowal that they have arisen from no neglect on the part of Government in removing every fiscal burden which could prove a discouragement in the price of any raw material used for fishing purposes. Hemp, timber, and salt, the three great staples, are all brought to the lowest possible standard of import duty payable to the State. In so far, therefore, our fisheries have received every proper consideration. Every encouragement has thus been given to cheap production. It may therefore, be supposed, and indeed taken for granted, that, whatever further can be done with propriety and wisdom, will be so, willingly and effectively. A period has evidently arrived when more than ordinary change will take place. It may be presumed that a new act of legislature will pass, more suitable to the improved opinions of the times, than those acts presently existing, the great majority of clauses in which are obsolete and inapplicable. Inquiry having been instituted as to the propriety of the Board of Commissioners for British Fisheries being maintained on its present footing, and at its present cost to the country, an impartial tribunal

will decide on the merits of the case. The attention of our Statesmen will also continue to be directed to the too narrow outlets now open for the produce of our coasts; and any hindrances to dealing on more favourable terms with neighbouring nations, fairly within the reach of the British Government to remove, it is hoped will not be permitted to stand longer in the way.

Under moderate European tariffs for salted fish from this country, it is not too much to expect that the Scottish fisheries might in the next ten years be doubled in amount; and that, too, not only in amount of produce, but of men, of money, and of material. To accomplish this most desirable state of things in the north of Scotland, is only needed that this field of industry should be advantageous for the employment of capital. In a national point of view, the fisheries are not in the state which could be desired. The fishermen remain the same hardy industrious race as ever, but on an average of the last ten years, there has undoubtedly been a loss in the working or floating capital embarked. The fisheries of Scotland may be said not only to be a British but a European interest, for, in the increase of cheap and wholesome food, lies one of the great secrets in the present day whereby to produce content and to allay the thirstful fever after change. The British Government cannot evince a patronage stronger to the Scottish fisheries than by a continuation of principles of commercial interchange.

No wiser plan can be adopted to produce a favourable impression that the produce of our seas may become a beneficial import to others, in the same

way that the salmon from the Rhine, the cattle from Belgium, and the fruit, vegetables, eggs, and poultry of France have become a welcome addition to the sustenance supply of England. In connexion with this new act of legislature, if it were possible to apply a part of the grant of £12,000, or £13,000, now expended on the Board of Fisheries, and the £3000 granted long ago by act of Parliament (see Appendix) by funding on the part of Government at a favourable rate of interest, to the erection of two or more commodious safety harbours on points of the coast where the fishery is likely to continue the most extensively to be prosecuted, and at points commanding a wide extent of coast, the most exposed to those perilous and destructive storms which periodically arise, then it might be justly said, that the Scottish fisheries were in a position from which to secure success and prosperity required but the industry and skill of our fishermen, and the judiciously applied capital of the curer. It is presumed that government will not insist on withdrawing the grants now expended, but that, if a saving in one way can be effected, the sum will be cheerfully applied in any other direction which the deliberation of Parliament may sanction to attain a great national good. Open European markets, on terms favourable to the cost of production, with harbours suitable to the safe prosecution of a land fishery in tempestuous weather, would seem to be the requisites at the present day. On looking at the map of Scotland, it will be seen how admirably nature has placed the noble roadstead of Cromarty as a refuge to the fishermen of an extensive district, from Speymouth on the one side of the frith to

Portmahommack on the other. If, then, one harbour of refuge was erected at the further eastern extremity of the Caithness coast, and one at the most eastern point of the Aberdeenshire, the fisheries would have received a most lasting proof of paternal government. The life blood of the fisheries runs around the hearts of the adventurous fishermen. He is the head and front in the working of the mine, and if an opportunity is lost when fairly offered, of granting Government aid in the above direction, then a mistake has been committed as regards the weal of the northern part of our Island, not in accordance with other munificent national bequests, granted to more favoured parts of the kingdom.

BENEFITS ARISING TO AGRICULTURE.

THE direct benefit which has arisen to agriculture from the extension of our fisheries has been in the production of manure. This is of a quality and property which, to certain soils in its nourishing and forcing power, could not be excelled. This soil abounds along the coasts of our island. In looking back some thirty years, nay, twenty, or even a still shorter period, in a hundred of such localities will be found waving the yellow corn, where formerly flourished in its native pride, the blooming heather. There is not a proprietor possessing an acre of land fit for cultivation on the shores surrounding the north of Scotland, but who, either from reason or experience, should have a deep and lively feeling in the successful prosecution of his trade by our hardy fishermen. A thriving fishing village will be found to make a return for capital in more ways than one; and it will ever be erroneous policy in the agriculturist to overlook the source of advantage, which, in the above point of view, may be in his power to employ. There is no fallacy in the assertion, that our fishings have much aggrandized the value of many landed estates. It has been well said that the influence of wealth raised Venice from the bosom of the deep, and made the desert and sandy

islands on which she is built, the favoured abodes of literature, of science, and of art. To that influence of wealth our northern landed proprietors have also been no strangers. To the growth and prosperity of the fisheries may be justly ascribed part of that improvement on their estates, part of that beauty with which the country is adorned by their noble parks and ornamental grounds, and part of that embellishing in their baronial halls, in the possession of which, over the land of the mountain and the flood, the eye is greeted with pleasure in every direction. In the numerous districts around our fishing villages and hamlets for the produce of the dairy and of the field, there is no more generous and constant consumer than he who plies his calling on the fruitful sea. There is a constant intercourse betwixt the coast and the interior; the traffic in detail is small, but, in the aggregate, large; and, for the haddock and the cod, is brought home the butter and the meal. The County of Caithness is allowed to be one of the most improving in Scotland, and it will not be denied that, in its increased and increasing cultivation, its fisheries have played no secondary part. On the estates surrounding the district of Wick, there are not more abundant crops of oats growing in the country. It is not only on the larger tracts of land capable of cultivation from moss and heather that this fruitfulness is to be found, but the traveller will observe on entering the county that every patch of tolerable soil is covered with a luxuriance of growth, not surpassed in districts with a better climate and a richer mould. Ten crans of herrings give a barrel of manure. A barrel of man-

ure is sold to the farmer for two shillings and sixpence. An average catch in July and August on the coast between Peterhead and Wick will produce 250,000 crans. This then will be paid in manure with a sum of upwards of £3,000. This is from the herring alone, for a certain season, and but for one distance of coast. Multiply it by the whole surrounding coast, and by every variety of fish, and the agriculturist in Scotland in the labours will be aided in a value of not less than £30,000, and indeed if £50,000 is stated, it will not be beyond the truth. 20 barrels of herring soil will satisfy an acre; so that from 25,000 barrels are enriched and rendered fertile and luxuriant 1250 acres. In the heavy clay lands of Morayshire, the farmers are as anxious to be customers as those in Caithness and in Aberdeenshire. Around Fraserburgh and Peterhead, a weekly carriage of ten and twelve miles is most willingly submitted to. From the nature of their labour the population of a thriving fishing village are proportionally larger consumers of the necessaries of life than any other class. It is sufficiently evident that the encouragement which the proprietors of our northern coasts may have it in their power to bestow to this portion of their property, will prove itself a rich appendix to their own and their successors' aggrandizement.

BENEFIT TO THE SALT MANUFACTURE.

THE quantity of salt used in the Scottish fisheries is an advantage to our English friends. Another wheel of industry is assisted in its motion by the casting of the net. The county of Chester and the port of Liverpool have an annual customer for this mineral, which in its abundance is so essential in bringing the fishings for cod or herring or haddock to the highest pitch of prosperity. If, in round numbers, around our coasts, there are 800,000 barrels of herrings, and 20,000 cod taken, the cure will require 50,000 tons of salt, at a value of £30,000, free on board in the Liverpool Docks. The import of Spanish salt into Scotland is but very inconsiderable, and though it may be approved of, for what is termed sprinkling in the herring cure, it could never in its use materially interfere with the consumption of the English manufacture. This is a demand which being inherent in the nation itself may ever be relied on, and points out in a strong light the internal interest which may be derived by the industry of one branch from that of another. The common Liverpool salt, for the proper rousing of the fish, and for the formation of the original pickle, could not be excelled. It is frequently put on board the ship rather new, but this can scarcely be avoided from the immense quantity ordered in the spring and summer months.

BENEFIT TO THE HOME GROWTH OF TIMBER.

Our fisheries have created a consumption of British timber, greater than may be generally known, and it is doubtful if the good thus derived is altogether properly appreciated. By not being sufficiently thought of, is meant that unlike the demand for ship-building, or for the more recent wants of railroads, the forester has to deal with the boat-builder on a smaller scale, and that the cutter of the barrel staves is pleased with the thinnings of the wood. It is ascertained that in the Buckie district, the herring boats are built wholly of Scottish timber, and this, with the exception of Wick, may serve as a criterion for the north and the west of Scotland. At Peterhead, the planks of the herring boat are of larch, the timbers of English oak, and the gunwales of American elm. This may serve as a guide to the build of the south and for Wick. In a stock estimated at a worth of half a million sterling, the timber required for an annual renewal, can be of no trifling consideration. The package for the herring is now much monopolized by the Norwegian billet, especially by all those curing for the Baltic markets. In the red herring barrel package, there is not much value. It is however of home growth, and its consumption comes to the assistance of the forester in the thinning of plantations. and for trees which are stunted in their growth. The value paid to the possessors of our Scottish woods for the package of fish, may not exceed a sum, annually, of, perhaps, £20,000. It is, however, an item in the budget, and with the sum

for boat-building, forms another link of interest between the Scottish proprietor and the fisheries. As the most spirited improvers of landed estates have been turning their attention to the advantage of planting in every suitable situation, so consumption of the kind now mentioned and its increase must be desirable, and welcome as a healthy relief to the future full growth of the forests. The price of the hull and spars of a boat built at Cullen is from £25 to £30; at Peterhead, £40.

BENEFIT TO OUR MERCANTILE MARINE.

In the transport of the whole material necessary to our fishings, in hemp and flax, in timber and in salt, our mercantile marine has had much employment; and in the carriage of the produce, for the last thirty years, there has been an annual demand for freightage, at a profitable rate of payment, during that long period, but wonderfully little varied in amount. In these many years, the freight of a barrel of herrings has been, from the east of Scotland to the port of Stettin, at an average, in the first of the season, 2s. 9d., and at the latter part, 3s. From our northern shores fish is the only foreign export. The class of vessels suitable to the harbours, and to the coasting trade in corn, in cattle, in lime, and in coals, is exactly that most answerable to the transport of the herring. The register tonnage may be given from 90 to 110 tons. The loading of a vessel for

the Baltic should not be less than 700, and should not exceed 1000 barrels. There being always a return freight from the Baltic, of one kind or other, either for grain, or timber, or spelter, the gaining of a hundred pounds outwards, secures a profit on a voyage of the average duration of two to three months. Of late years the number of vessels of the burden mentioned, has increased at every port in the Moray Frith; and it is the policy and arrangement of the captain and owner, that his craft appears at home in the months of July, August, or September. In the export of 100,000 barrels, upwards of a hundred cargoes are made up, with a payment of outward freight exceeding £10,000. In the hands of the northern shipowner this is annually no unwelcome sum, and the earning of it is enhanced by being at a season when there exists a dulness in coasting employment. In the carriage of 50,000 tons of salt at 8s. per ton, which, to one place and another the freightage will average, arises another sum of £20,000. The vessels with the salt cargoes are many of a different class, of a less size, chiefly belonging to the south-west of Scotland, and having lastage for 4 and 500 barrels of herrings. These again are annually taken up for a return freight to Ireland, Liverpool, and the Bristol Channel, at rates varying from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per barrel. To all this weighty employment has to be added the carriage of store-wood, staves, bark, and other stores incidental to the wants of a shore fishery. In its aggregate, it is difficult to give a name to the worth of the Scottish fisheries to the mercantile marine; but, if the trade in cod fish, in haddock, and the

freightage of the red herrings be added, the latter of which is chiefly carried by steam, then, it is not beyond the mark, if a sum be named of between £70,000 and £80,000 which is annually flowing from hand to hand in all the various expenditure of the shipping interest belonging to the kingdom. Of the cured fish, foreigners carry a proportion. The Prussians, the Danes, and Norwegians have a share; but undoubtedly the great bulk of freight created by the Scottish fisheries remains for the benefit and increase of British industry, and to foster and create the skill of British seamen, by practical navigation, and acquaintance with every creek and harbour around Scotland, England, and Ireland.

BENEFIT TO THE SCOTTISH BANKS.

In the north of Scotland, the two great sources of business applicable to general transactions in banking are agriculture and fisheries. Of these two, agriculture embraces the larger amount, but the healthiness of the business created by the fisheries is of equal value. North of Aberdeen, the benefit from manufactures is of small importance. From the day on which the package for the fish is commenced to be prepared, the circulation of the money of the country begins to flow for the year, the current widens till the great stock of produce is secured, and then a business in money is carried on along our coasts daily, not in hundreds of pounds, but in thou-

sands. From the foreign trade the banker derives a circulation of notes, a discount at the best rate of interest on foreign bills, running, on an average, from 30 to 60 days, and these bills all payable in London. In the three autumn shipping months, through the bank agencies between Peterhead and Wick, a sum of not less than £150,000 will thus be found employed. Of late years, from the numerous bank agencies which have been placed in every district, the value of circulation of bank notes amongst fishermen must have diminished, yet still in many hundred of cases from their isolated position, their living in villages miles apart from towns, the circulating medium which is amongst them must remain longer out of the banker's coffers than when in the hands of another class. Where, in another point of view, a deposit to the bank comes from a prudent saving fisherman, it will be found to remain a longer time undisturbed than when placed in the name of those liable to mix more in the general affairs of life, and who have a more general intercourse with their fellow-men. The privilege of paying with their own notes, and the advantage of circulating the one-pound note, since a remote period, at all events from the 1695, the year of the establishment of the bank of Scotland, or in 1704, when the bank first issued the one-pound note, has been held out as that part of the Scotch monetary system which has enabled the banks to encourage in their more liberal dealings with their customers the industry of the country. Granted that this may have been the case, it will not be denied that the banks themselves have derived much of their profit from this source.

This being the case, it follows that, as all the exchangeable value of the Scottish fisheries resolves itself gradually into the small circulating medium divided into many hands, the Scottish banks receive a gain, far more than a counterbalance for the convenience which their system of banking may give to the fishing coast. The principal feature in that system, namely, the granting of cash accounts on the undoubted credit and security of two or more persons, has been but little patronised by fishermen, and though additional capital may through this channel have given its forcing power to the fisheries, yet not in that proportion of profit to the country which the running stream of fishing commerce in all its complex and manifold details has created to the banks.

BENEFIT TO THE NAVIGATION OF THE CALEDONIAN CANAL.

From the position which this great national undertaking holds in its line of communication between the east and west coasts, it can at once be seen that now that the dues levied for its navigation are on a moderate scale, the prosperity of the Scottish fisheries on the Moray side of the frith, and on the coasts from Wick to Cromarty, must have a very influencing tendency to increase its revenue. It promises annually to draw towards it an increase of traffic. The canal after a long interval has been open since May, 1847. During the latter part of 1847, 135

cargoes of herrings passed through the canal, and up to the 14th December, 1848, 150 cargoes had made use of this navigation. The charges on the canal are rated on the register tonnage of the vessels, so that no accurate criterion can be made of the quantity of fish. From the average size of the vessels, however, it is supposed that the weight of fish in season 1848 could not be less than from 10 to 12,000 tons.

That the formation of this splendid junction of the highland lochs is now of the most primary importance to the north-east of Scotland fishings is evident as the sun at noon-day.

In the certainty of the passage it affords, in the fish going more readily to market, in its comparative short distance from the great seat of the fishery, in the shortening of the voyage with salt from Liverpool, in the comparatively easy access it gives to the Irish coast and the Bristol channel; all these are undeniably advantages created by the Caledonian Canal. But now that this great application of national means to a beneficial end is completed, what is here wished to be advanced is, that, in a wider field being created for the fisheries, and their consequent prosperity lies one more certain support of the canal, than if, by discouraging circumstances, capital were to be gradually withdrawn from this source of commerce. Now that the magnificent work is at the service of the country it ought to be the eager desire that every interest connected with its welfare should flourish; and it is in this point of view that the fisheries, in their profitable condition, draw around them another degree of interest in the national mind. It may be

mentioned that, as a striking instance of the superior comfort and safety of the Canal passage in unfavourable weather, that, at the close of the herring fishing in 1847, upwards of a hundred of the fishing boats from Wick returned to their homes on the west coasts of Ross and Sutherlandshire by way of the Canal, thus making a circuit of nearly three hundred miles, besides the expense incurred, rather than encounter the passage by the Pentland Frith and round Cape Wrath. A considerable number also did so at the close of fishing 1848, though the greater number, from the favourable state of the weather, took the shorter route. Of course it is only in such cases as these, with the boats and the situation of their homes, that the canal passage happens to be the longest; to the shipping trade generally it is the shortest.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR BRITISH FISHERIES.

THIS is an establishment which has for many years performed a prominent part in connexion with the Scottish fisheries. For a long time it has been gifted with a controlling power. By the fourth clause of the act of Parliament, passed 25th June, 1808, (see Appendix), it will be seen that, in the 13th year of the reign of George the first, twenty-one Trustees were appointed to direct and improve the Linen manufacture of Scotland, and they could be increased to twenty-eight. By the 5th clause of the same act (see Appendix), his Majesty might appoint seven of these Trustees to act as a Board of Management, or Direction, in seeing carried faithfully into execution the Acts of Parliament in all their powers and trusts relative to the white herring fishery, and cod, ling, or hake. This Board has existed, then, now for a period of thirty-eight years. By the second clause of the Act (see Appendix), passed 14th June, 1815, the Advocate and Solicitor General of Scotland were added to the Commissioners. They are therefore nine in number. Those acting at present are, Lord Melville, Lord Murray, Lord Berriedale, Lord Hope, Sir Henry Jardine, James Loch, Esq., Robert Graham, Esq., with the Lord Advocate, Andrew Rutherford, Esq., and the

Solicitor General, William Maitland, Esq. These noblemen and gentlemen give their service gratuitously. There is a paid secretary, a general inspector, some thirty to forty officers at the various districts, maintained by Government, at a cost, altogether in round numbers, of about £12,000 per annum. Previous to 1830, the Board had the disbursement of a considerable sum of money. In the year ending 5th April, 1821, there were branded 363,872 barrels of herrings. This was the largest quantity ever presented for bounty, and, at four shillings per barrel, amounts to the large sum of £72,774 8s. It is evident, in reading the Acts of Parliament, that one principal duty of the board and its officers had reference to the payment of the bounties. Since 1830, the operation of those Acts may be said virtually to have ceased. The Board in courtesy has continued to exist, and its officers have continued to see certain regulations carried into effect, at the option of those in the curing interest who were willing to accept, on the terms offered, what could still be given, namely, the official brand. Previous to the year 1830, the Board of Commissioners for British Fisheries seems to have been a wise protective plan of the Government, added to which, the various regulations under it were doubtless made after mature deliberation, to effect improvement and advance the character of the fishery. A guarantee was given of its faithfulness, in the names of high standing and character who have all along been acting in the commission under the crown.

At last, however, inquiry is set on foot, whether or not, from altered circnmstances, some change is

not necessary. The expenditure of the Board by many it is thought might be modified; and there is a variety of opinion as to whether or not the fisheries might maintain their character and position without the intervention of a Board at all. This it will be from evidence obtained for the British Legislature to determine. One of our well-known and latest writers on political economy—Mr. M'Culloch—gives an opinion rather hostile to the Commission; but, without disagreeing in the main from his views, it is possible that some practical reasoning may be advanced to induce the continuance of a Board, when restricted both in its expenditure and in its direct interference with the details of the fishing. In his hope that patriots and statesmen will cease to torment themselves with schemes for the improvement of our fisheries there is a wide meaning. That good legislative enactment is still wanting to the fisheries there cannot be a doubt, and if it is advisable that certain parties be appointed, however few in number, to certify to the country annually that such enactment is in healthy operation, it is quite immaterial that the name of Board should accompany their services.

BENEFIT ARISING IN THE EARLY PERIOD OF ITS ESTABLISHMENT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF OFFICERS.

THE regularity in every part of the process in the cure introduced by the officers, on their first being established, could not fail to raise the value of the fishery in general estimation, and more particularly in foreign markets. The officers, all being thorough-bred coopers, were the more capable of enforcing the regulations laid down. That which first told to advantage was the selection of the fish. The separation of *full fish* from the *lank*, or *shotten*, enabled the British caught herring, to a certain degree, to enter into rivalry with the Dutch. The merchant knew better in what he was dealing. From the regulation of gutting with a knife—that knife of the most suitable shape and size, and in its proper and skilful handling—a barrel of bung-packed herrings began to assume a uniformity of appearance, a sightliness and a neatness which previously had been wanting. Mr. M'Culloch writes—"The grand object of the herring fishery 'Board,' has been to enforce such a system of curing as would bring British herrings to a level with those of the Dutch. In this, however, they have completely failed." Here

Mr. M'Culloch must have been writing from hearsay. Like many other writers on similar subjects, he was practically unacquainted with the matter. In the first place, the Dutch fishery is well known to go under the name of a deep-sea fishing, or more plainly, a fishing where all the operations of cure are adroitly managed on board the vessel; whereas, the Scotch herring fishery is a land or shore fishery, or, otherwise, a fishery where the catching of the fish is from a boat, and all the other details are proceeded with on land. The circumstances under which each is placed, do not permit them well to be compared together. The Dutch, for instance, have it in their power to bleed the fish soon after they are caught. Let a Scotch fishing-boat, however, towards the end of July, deliver at any of the stations along the coast, about the hour of six in the morning, six to eight crans of fine full herrings; let these be immediately carefully gutted, roused, and packed straight on their backs in the barrel, all under cover, and completed perhaps within a couple of hours; at the proper time after the fish are pined, let the barrels be filled up, sprinkled with St. Ubes salt, properly pickled and finished in the best and most careful manner,—the party will then be a very good judge indeed of the quality of herrings who will decide whether they are Scotch or Dutch. The Scotch cure, as a land or shore fishery, has undoubtedly assumed the first place, and that it is in so far indebted, for this improved position, to the vigilant attention of the officers in seeing that all the regulations of gutting, packing, and salting were duly performed, before the bounties were paid, there can be but one

opinion. The facts can be only stated as they are, and it would be a useless disquisition to enter upon how matters would have stood had there been no bounty and no board. The officers' attendance did much in introducing regularity into the whole system of the curing yard. The instructions given to the women in directing the proper division of the work —two gutters for one packer; in the guaging of the casks; and in constant advice for the running off and filling again properly with pickle; indeed, in bringing into system the whole of the work to its veriest details, there is no denial that the presence of the officers were and have been of the most efficient service.

It is all very well to admit, that after a lapse of twenty or thirty years, the character attained will maintain itself, but, it must occur to every unprejudiced mind, that a moral influence has been created over the whole of this branch of industry, tending to a uniformity of action, which, in the early stage of our shore fisheries, might not have been so well supplied. The machinery when once framed, formed, and set in motion, may go on smoothly and profitably, but the master-hand who guided it in its first movement, his merit must not be overlooked. Mr. M'Culloch writes, that in the consumption of fish in Scotland and Ireland, cheapness is the prime requisite. It is perfectly true that cheapness in an article of food will always recommend consumption, but it is also true that, when our salted herrings arrive in Saxony or the Rhine provinces, excellence of cure must likewise accompany the price; and if a distinc-

tive degree of quality has been arrived at, not a little of it is due to the benefit arising in the early period of the establishment of the board from the superintendance of its officers.

BRANDING SYSTEM IMPARTIALLY CONSIDERED.

THE branding or marking the barrels of cod or herrings with a red hot iron on the bulge is first mentioned in the 36th clause of the Act of Parliament, passed in the year 1808; and it is there distinctly stated that this branding or mark is for the intention of entitling the curer to the duty of two shillings per barrel. "Nor for any herrings which shall be contained in any barrel not of sufficient strength, or not containing thirty-two gallons English wine measure, or on which the name of the curer thereof, and the name of the port or place where, and the year when, the same were cured shall not be branded with a hot iron in large, legible, conspicuous, and permanent characters, or on which such mark or marks, character or characters, shall not have been set at the fishery, as is directed by this Act, or shall not remain thereon distinctly legible, denoting the day on which the same were cured, and that the same were cured gutted; nor for any barrel of herrings, on which at the time of its being produced to the proper officer of the fishery, in order to be branded with a mark or character to denote that the curer thereof is entitled to the bounty of two shillings per barrel, hereby given according to the directions of this Act," and so on. (See Appendix).

In clause 37th of the same Act it is also mentioned—"And upon every barrel of herrings, which, on such examination and examination as aforesaid, shall be found by said officer to be in all respects such as to entitle the curer or curers thereof to the bounty of two shillings hereby granted;" and so on it is again particularly taken notice of in the 29th clause of the act of 1815—"And be it further enacted, that where any word or words is or are by this Act directed or required to be branded, on any barrel or cask, the same shall be branded with a hot iron on the bulge thereof in legible, conspicuous, and permanent letters, whereof each shall not be less than one inch and a half in length."

It is clear that the brand of the fishery Board was originally devised as a protection to the Government, under strict regulations, that the bounties awarded were correctly paid; and it is but a fair and impartial conclusion to make, that, if no bounty had been given, no brand would have existed. In the year 1830, the payment of bounties ceased, but the brand has been continued without any change in the regulations, a period now of eighteen years. In its maintenance for so long a time after the original cause of its existence had been removed, it must be not unfairly inferred, that this mark or branding of a Crown with the word "full" below it, denoting that the fish are all selected of a kind with milt and roe previous to spawning, or a Crown alone when the fish are of a kind shotten, had gradually assumed the performance of some other use than that of merely being a guarantee in the payment of the bounty.

This use has been in giving a distinctive quality to a barrel of herrings when so branded, in every market open to their consumption. For the last eighteen years, the brand has served as a buying and selling mark over the whole of the North of Europe. Every dealer in herrings in Saxony, Silesia, or Bohemia, and latterly, in the Rhenish provinces of Prussia, has an idea in his mind of the article he will receive from Scotland, when, in the invoice, stands so many barrels of crown full-branded herrings. It has hitherto been distinctive of the first quality of fish. Orders from Pesth in Hungary could and have been given, and could, and have been executed under the brand, with the same confidence and the same satisfactory result, as if the buyer had been upon the spot. The brand has facilitated transactions of magnitude within a given space of time. The general herring fishing commences about the 20th July, the first shipments to Stettin and Hamburg are made about the first of August of unbranded or July fish, and the autumn shipping season to the Baltic cannot be fairly taken at later than the first of November from the Scottish coast, a period of three months. Under the brand, the author of this work, as a foreign commission merchant, has, from various stations on the coast, shipped, in two months and a half, thirty-eight cargoes of herrings; and he has every reason to believe that other commission houses have exceeded this quantity. Without the brand it is difficult to say how this could have been accomplished, or how in the above time 25,000 barrels could have been bought and satisfactorily inspected. In the system of exchange between one country and

another, there is a direct credit and an indirect credit. In our herring transactions with Germany, the direct credit is on London, the indirect on Hamburg. Under the brand there were many respectable German dealers who ordered annually their two, three, or four hundred barrels, who had the means of giving with facility an indirect credit on Hamburg, when a direct credit on London might have been a matter of some hindrance and difficulty to arrange. Some houses of known trust preferred to remit on receipt of bill of lading and invoice, and under the brand this could and has been safely submitted to. Without the brand, all transactions on commission must resolve themselves into confirmed London direct credits. Without some discriminative characteristic in the invoice of the goods sent, disputes might arise between buyer and seller, which the commission merchant would have difficulty satisfactorily to arrange, and for which he would be liable himself to suffer. Indirect credits would be apt to be withdrawn previous to the bills being presented for acceptance, and thus to the commission merchant paying cash with the one hand, on the faith that it is to be immediately received by the other, the only safety would be to resort to the protection of a confirmed London credit, certainly, as must be allowed, the soundest operation, though leading likely to a contraction of general business.

The duty of officers under the Board has now-a-days principally resolved itself into that of giving the official brand. On examination into this service it is found that it is very unequally divided, but no fault on this account can be laid to the establishment.

It is impossible for the Board to be acquainted in what locality the fishing may spring up; whilst to give but fair play to all, every district must be provided for. On looking over how matters stood in this respect in the year ending 5th January, 1848, it is found that the smallest number branded at one station, namely, North Sunderland, was 62 barrels; that the next was at Stonehaven, 116 barrels; that at eight stations the quantity branded was under, at each, 2,000 barrels; that at two stations there were branded, at each, 10,000; and that other five stations, namely, Fraserburgh, Helmsdale, Lybster, Peterhead, the balance of the whole, branded and assorted after the Dutch fashion, was made up, namely, 36,769½ barrels; the highest being at Wick, 26,729½ barrels; the next, Peterhead, 23,493 barrels. The whole quantity of fish branded during that year, Crownfull, and Crown, amounted to 146,500½ barrels. The duty of the officers, therefore, was very unequal; the burden of the work falling but on a few. On looking back from the year 1830, the important fact must be noticed, that though the total quantity of herrings caught, has in that period nearly doubled itself, yet the number of barrels presented for brand has gradually lessened, nearly in a corresponding ratio. The total quantity caught in the year ending April, 1830, was 329,557 barrels; branded barrels, 218,418½. The quantity caught in the year ending 5th January, 1848, was, barrels, 562,743½; branded as before stated, barrels, 146,500½. In accounting for this state of matters, whilst the increase of the cure must be attributed in the greatest degree to home consumption, the cause of the falling off in the brand will be found to

be an opinion in the mind of those in the fish-curing interest engaged in business with Ireland, England, and Scotland, founded on experience, that the cure was by their customers equally estimated without as with the brand. Under this conviction they naturally began to evade any trouble occasioned by the Board regulations; and as they found that the article maintained an equal price, and that the taste of the consumer was equally pleased, so year after year has the connexion with the fishery Board been more and more broken off. With the foreign trade again this has not been the case. In it opinion has run in the very opposite direction. In its annual growth it has been accompanied by the official brand. Over Northern and Southern Germany, to every cargo ordered, the Crown-full has been a necessary appendage.

It is well known that Stettin has for many years been the chief mart for Scottish herrings. It is with this port that the increase of the trade can be best shown. The periodical import may thus be given:— In the year 1824, it was barrels 15,468; in the year 1830, barrels, 33,366; in the year 1840, barrels, 73,749; in the year 1847, barrels, 110,200. With the exception of from 8 to 12,000 barrels of July fish, which have of late years been sent off without the brand, that official mark has been invariably expected to be on the barrels, as distinctive of the best quality of selected fish, and of a solid and good package; and any shipments coming into the general market without it suffered in value from ten to fifteen per cent. That there has been a usefulness and not a hindrance to our growing foreign connexion

by the brand, impartially judging, from its practical working, will fairly be admitted. That this growing commerce with Germany has been on a satisfactory footing, as regards a return for capital, is another question. Whilst the brand has served a purpose, it has still had a levelling property; and this is an evil which has been in the way, leading to a more easy indulgence in speculation. Consignments of white herrings to foreign markets on the part of curers in the wide experience of many years, has been productive of much loss of capital to the north of Scotland.

The curer who consigns his goods, usurps the place of the merchant. He uses a double capital—that of the merchant, and that of the manufacturer. There being many therefore in the business not so possessed of capital, it is clear that a departure from the prudent resolve of waiting till a sale on the spot can be effected, is calculated to produce both expense and frequently much monetary inconvenience. The accepting of advances on herrings is a dear mode of raising money, added to which it removes the power over property from the original holder. In many instances it is true that a transaction of the kind may be carried into effect without loss if without any great profit, and the money remitted in time to serve the consigner's purpose; but as in every lottery there are some prizes, so, in the lottery of consignment, there are many blanks. To foster and encourage consignment, the official brand has had an active agency. As orders on commission from the continent have been productive of the most solid results, so the brand, in its universal application to the stock of fish along the coast, has conferred the power to

meet every cargo executed on commission by another on consignment. From a stock of 1000 barrels, if a merchant buys 500 on the spot for Dantzig, Stettin, or Hamburg, the other 500 barrels may arrive on consignment at the same market, and even on the same day. Both parcels are under the character of the official brand; but to realise the consignment, the likelihood is, that a less price than the one paid in Scotland must be submitted to, thus rendering discontented with his bargain the German dealer forwarding the order on commission. In fact, this is the nature of the transactions which have been in operation on a large scale, more especially for the last five or six years; and which have almost entirely withdrawn from the coast orders on commission. The official brand in its general protection has given a facility to speculation, although it is not meant that it has been the cause. The general protection of an official brand has also another failing. It would be an error to suppose that the official Crown-full gives an equal, though it does a distinctive, and the best quality. It is not easy to determine with exactness the difference which might exist in the real value of the Full Brand; but it may be stated without fear of contradiction, that in a cargo of 800 barrels from eight shippers, there may be amongst the various parcels a difference of five per cent in real value, and yet all entitled perfectly to the official mark, and made up in conformity with the regulations.

This difference in value in an article of salted fish, and particularly from the nature of a shore fishing, it is almost impossible to escape; and under the

present system of inspection, the value is as nearly equalized as it could be upon the broad basis of any general distinctive mark or character.

As the service of the officers under the Board of fisheries has resolved itself principally into the granting of the official brand, it is more than probable that the consideration of the British Parliament will be directed to the amount of money which is annually expended on the establishment. When it is seen that the quantity branded is barrels, 146,000, and that the expense of the Board is £12,000 per annum, there is every reason to believe that a proposition will be made either to annul the Board altogether, or to re-organize it on a cheaper and more economical footing. Should the resolution be passed to break up the establishment, then the character of the Scottish fishery, in the maintenance of its present position and in its further progress, must depend on that honour and integrity, on that spirit and on that skill which is the distinguishing animus of British industry. The sound maxim in trade, that every man's fame or *renommee* should spring from individual ability, cannot be controverted, and in the truth of its abstract principle the application must be made to the fish-curing interest as well as to that of every other. The workman should be worthy of his hire; but the master is answerable for the work. Improper practices in fish-curing will ever defeat their object, the same as carelessness or evil design in every other trade leads invariably to confusion and loss of character. It may be however, that a resolve may be come at to re-organize the Board, perhaps chiefly from the fact that the brand

has been of benefit in the practical prosecution of the foreign trade. In this point of view prudence will be the prompter to a policy of not disturbing a European opinion which has been the gradual growth of so many years.

REMARKS ON CHANGES IN THE BOARD OF FISHERIES

WHICH, PERHAPS, MIGHT BE ADVANTAGEOUSLY CARRIED OUT.

IN proposing change in a Board framed by Acts of the Legislature, and of long standing, and high character, a writer places himself in a delicate position. It is impossible, however, to overlook the prevailing opinion that the establishment in question has become too costly to the country for the duties which now devolve upon it. Should Government think well of continuing the Board under healthy alteration, then it is desirable that, along with retrenchment, efficiency should be combined. The object at present most desirable to be attained, is. to maintain an inspection at a small cost. To render this inspection acceptable to the views of all parties, it must continue without compulsion on the part of curers to receive it, unless dictated by their own interest. Every possible freedom of action in the process of manufacture must be permitted. Supposing, then, that the officers under the Board ceased to hold their situations on the present footing, it is suggested, with every deference to general opinion, that, along the whole coast, a sufficient number of persons duly qualified shall e appointed by Government, to perform certain duties under a certain guarantee, and

under the name of Licensed Inspectors. The source of remuneration is the chief point of importance to be considered. Taking it for granted, then, that no application will be made for official inspection, unless where its value is required for the disposal of the fish, it is suggested to remove the payment of the cost from the public exchequer to the article itself. If a barrel of herrings will bear a better market value in a foreign market with an official brand than without it, then it is quite reasonable that the expense of that brand shall lie upon the goods. Of course it is not understood that a Licensed Inspector will draw his whole income from that appointment. The occupation will bring but partial employment.

It is suggested that a barrel of white bung-packed herrings for the official brand be burdened by a charge on the curer to the Inspector of twopence per barrel. If the extra value will not bear this small item, then the worth of the brand must be fictitious, unreal, and not deserving the trouble of looking after.

Similar proportionate rates might be fixed for other kinds and other qualities of fish. It is true that the various districts would be of unequal value to the inspectors, but then, so would also be the work. The appointments on application, when vacant, might be changed by rotation, and standing in the service from a poorer to a better district. A medium district of 10,000 barrels would produce better than £80 per annum, a sum quite equivalent to the time employed. It is understood that, under the system of these Licensed Inspectors, an establishment under the name of Board should be maintained

at Leith or Edinburgh, though on a reduced scale from the present. The office of Secretary and General Inspector might be thrown into one. The same Honorary Commissioners might remain, but there might be added two or three paid Commissioners, and these, with a couple of Clerks could fulfil every possible duty, and supply every information which the country might desire, relative to the state of our fisheries in every branch. With this establishment it will be the duty of Inspectors to correspond. It will be the duty of each Inspector to collect in his district the same statistical information as has been hitherto done, and communicate the same, as before, to the Secretary of the Board. The Inspectors could act under the same oath of fidelity as under the present act (see Appendix). Should the present officers be set aside, it may be expected that their claims for retired allowances will be duly considered, and if granted, then there could be no objection to appoint those officers who might apply to the places of Licensed Inspectors under the new system. Without at all detracting from those services which the Honorary Commissioners have given for so many years, the appointment of two or three paid Commissioners, of practical commercial knowledge, might add to the efficiency of the Board; and if the whole expense did not exceed a couple of thousand pounds per annum, then it is conceived that the views of all parties would be fairly met. The objections of those who consider the present expense is not warranted will be removed, whilst those who wish, for the sake of our foreign trade, an official mark to be continued, will have his desideratum at their command.

The foreign commission merchant will be enabled to carry on his business as effectively as ever. The curer will suffer no wrong when the extra charge of the brand, when wanted, lies in his bargain with the merchant, and the country will be pleased at having every legalized measure, and every proper regulation connected with our fisheries, and every statistical information as to their existing condition, given at a small and reasonable cost; and it will be a general gratification for all, to think that, with the approbation of Government, a sum of £10,000 per annum from the former grant may be funded, producing a sum of upwards of £200,000 towards the erection of those safety harbours which are so much wanted in giving a farther impetus to the prosperity of the Scottish fisheries. If to this amount be added the £3000 per annum still granted by former acts (see Appendix), for the encouragement of Scottish purposes; if this £3000 were also funded, then a handsome sum would be provided towards the erection of a safety harbour on the Aberdeenshire coast, and one on the Caithness. All that can be argued for in this work, is the retention of that which is already given, applied in a way the most likely to produce the greatest good.

CONSIDERATION OF CLAUSES FOR A NEW ACT OF PARLIAMENT,

WITH OR WITHOUT A CONTINUANCE OF THE BOARD.

IT is to be presumed, under the altered circumstances affecting the Acts of Parliament applicable to the Scottish fisheries, that a proper time has arrived when a new act is desirable, carrying with it what may be deemed beneficial clauses from the old, and embodying in it clauses suggested by the experience of the past. If a change in the Board of Fisheries is determined on—if it is remodelled as mentioned in the last article, then the clauses pertaining to that remodelling will naturally take precedence in the Bill; but if it should be resolved on by Government to do away with the Board altogether, then there are clauses for a new Bill, the due consideration of which will be of paramount importance.

If it should be determined that the present grant of £12,000 per annum, the present expense of the Board of Fisheries, shall be continued to the fisheries, and it is not presumed that any one will argue against their deserving such continuance, but that a very large saving shall be effected by a change of system, then the first clause in a new Bill might be the application of that saving, in the way most likely to produce solid and lasting improvement.

If the Board is to be remodelled and placed on a footing equally effective as it now exists, though involving but a sixth part of its present expenditure, then the second clause and following might enact this change in all its several details; the constitution of the new Board, and the duties and remuneration of all under, belonging or connected with it.

Any clauses which are found good and useful, and still pertaining to present practice in the fisheries, might then follow—such as no net to be used that has a mesh of less than one inch from knot to knot. Boats employed in the herring fishery to have name of the place to which they belong and name of owner painted thereon. Herring nets set or hauled on Sundays to be forfeited, and any others which expediency or propriety may dictate. The first new clause of importance, and which seems to be generally if not universally entertained should pass the Legislature, is that of a *close* season for herrings. This has been brought particularly under the notice of the general interest, from the fact of an early or May fishing for herrings having of late years been prosecuted at Stornoway, in the Island of Lewes. This has had a decided tendency to depress the prosperity of the general fishing. It begins early in May, and is prosecuted for a period of five or six weeks. It has been fostered and persevered in by the hopes indulged of being the first to reach the German markets, and of securing the extravagant prices which are sometimes realized for first arrivals. From this source has been exported, in past years, to Stettin and Hamburg, a quantity varying with the success, though never less than some thousand barrels. The quality of the fish has been even

meagre, unripe, and tasteless, not in a condition suitable for salting, and, therefore, in some instances, not keeping even during the voyage. The speculation has not been profitable to those engaged in it, but it has had a most injurious effect in forestalling the general fishing. In another part of the year there is a fishing on the west coast called the Ballintrae, which interferes much with the young herring on its way to Loch Fyne; and there is another in the Frith of Forth very destructive to the fry. To meet the general wish, and the general opinion of the whole curing interest, it is proposed to pass, by legislative enactment, the following clauses:—

"That there shall be a close season for the fishing of herrings on the east coast of Scotland, from Berwick to Cape Wrath, commencing 28th February, and continuing to the 1st of June; and along the west coast from Cape Wrath, commencing on the 15th January, and continuing to the 1st of June; and that every attempt around the coasts of Great Britain, made previously to the 1st of June to catch herrings, be visited by a penalty to each boat, and for each attempt, of £5, and the seizure of the fish which may be caught."

This will be found a clause of much value to our fisheries. The Dutch have changed their day of commencement from the 24th June to the 10th, but it is believed that few days earlier may well be given into, and that, from the then ripeness of the fish, they will give satisfaction at market, and also that the views of every locality will be fairly adjusted,

The Second new clause which is suggested is relative to the official brand. It has long been the

opinion of practical men, that the period for a barrel to lie previous to obtaining the brand, namely, fifteen days, not including the day of catch or the day of branding, has been uselessly too long, and that a barrel of herrings can be properly filled, and in every way made up in a satisfactory manner for brand on the twelfth day. The clause proposed is—"That a barrel of herrings, instead of lying sixteen clear days, and being branded on the seventeenth, should lie but eleven clear days, and be branded on the twelfth day." This will be a very important change to the fisheries, and will not meet a dissenting voice. It will, in every probability, have the effect of doing away with *unbranded July* fish, eight days old, a quality never altogether satisfactory to the receiver at market, often justly open to the complaint of being too slightly packed, and as frequently made objections to when not really deserved. The autumn shipping season to the Baltic, taken at the utmost, is not longer than twelve weeks, but if it is allowed that the fish may be all branded by the 20th September, it will be found that, from the 20th July, the saving of five days on every seventeen will give a longer shipping season by a fortnight to three weeks, and that the shipments will have the likelihood to reach the market with greater regularity, and not in such masses as, from wind and weather, too often happens. Besides, in many smaller harbours, the neap tides would not act so injuriously in preventing vessels from getting to sea. Where a commodity has to reach a market in a given time, there cannot be a question that every impediment to activity of purpose should be removed. Receivers of goods in

the interior would be more quickly served—consumption would be better supplied, and thus an impetus given to trade, which the present delay in branding only tends to retard. In the foreign trade, transactions would be more numerous, attended by what is always desirable, a more rapid circulation of capital.

Clause Third.—This belongs to the application of the brand, and has its worth in distinguishing the quality of fish. "That the Crown Brand should be given only to fish part Full and part Shotten, or mixed Fish."

Clause Fourth.—This is another of the same. "That the Crown, with the word Shotten attached to it, or the letter S or L should be given to fish wholly Shotten or Lank."

Clause Fifth.—This is another of the same. "That the curer should have it in his option to have the letters BP, for Baltic Pack, added to the Brand, to parcels of fish really packed straight, and found to be so on inspection, and the letters HP, for Home Pack, added when the fish are really Broad Packed, or packed on their sides, and found so on inspection." There has never yet been any distinguishing mark under the Board for fish packed for the Baltic, or fish cured for home consumption, but this has been an advantage overlooked, as it is well known how much appreciated, in the foreign market, the *straight pack* is; and it is but fair, when a curer is inclined by extra care to make up the fish in this way, that it should be certified.

Clause Sixth.—"That under the system of Licensed Inspectors (should such be resolved upon) the scheduling of herrings caught as formerly should be

given up, and that the Inspector, on receiving a declaration from the curer that any parcel of fish had been in salt the appointed time, should inspect the same, and should grant the brand on finding the fish properly prepared as to selection, packing, gutting, salting, fulness of barrel, and the barrels of legal size; the coopers, as formerly, dating each barrel on the day on which it was caught." This clause will give every desirable freedom of action to the curer in his operations.

Clause Seventh.—This is important. It is—"That every package or measure used in the fisheries should be of a legalized size, and liable to penalty when found not so. That every four quarter baskets should be marked as equal to the legalized Cran. That red-herring barrels, barrels for cured haddocks, quarter casks, eighths, and sixteenths, for pickled fish should all be legalised the same as barrels and half barrels for pickled fish, and in proportion to 32 wine gallons for the white herring barrel, and 28 wine gallons for the red." This clause will be necessary for the fisheries, even should it stand as an enactment by itself.

Clause Eighth.—"That the purchase of white fish by the curer from the fishermen should be by weight," This clause is recommended as a more satisfactory mode of dealing for both buyer and seller, than if, as has been partially the custom, by the size of fish, and is important as being a fixed rate of value, by which specific bargains and contracts can be with safety to each entered into.

Clause Ninth.—This is a clause of vital worth. It is the doing away altogether of an evil which has

long been permitted to exist. Comment is almost useless in the present day, where the cause of temperance and sobriety is in question. Added to this on commercial principle, the practice ought not to be allowed, as the value given is not only morally incorrect, but also substantially so, or at all events, not used to the same account as the coin of the realm. An anker of spirits as any other marketable commodity has its intrinsic value, but as an article of barter may be fairly objected to from the result of its use, and the variety of opinion formed of its value by the indulgence in that use more freely than moderation can sanction. The clause is, "That in any contract which may be made between curer and fisherman, it shall not be legal to represent part of payment of the fish by ardent spirits instead of money, but that money shall be paid for all; and that every such bargain, where ardent spirits are introduced as part payment, shall be null and void and not binding on either party." To the working coopers on every station where spirits are introduced as part payment, this clause will be a blessing as well as to the fishermen. An anker of spirits has on the face of it the name of *bribe*.

Clause Tenth.—This is proposed to relate to that system of bounties, as between curer and fisherman, and the evils of which have been already treated of. It is suggested to be enacted as follows—"That no curer shall henceforth forstall the labours of fishermen by sums of money in the shape of bribe and under the name of bounty." The Legislature will by this enactment confer a lasting boon, more particularly on the east coast of Scotland, where the

custom has chiefly prevailed. Should a fisherman require a few pounds previous to a fishing, to fit him out with material or for any other necessaries, it can be given according to the judgment of the curer, as advance towards the general payment, and can be so deducted when the result of success is ascertained and the time of settlement has arrived. There is not a sum on the two thousand boats fishing between Peterhead and Wick frittered away, and it may be said never heard of, than £20,000, and ofttimes 25 to £30,000. This enactment will be a most salutary ingredient in an effort to bring the Scottish fisheries into prosperity. It will be a hardship on none but a good to all. The fisherman will be brought to think more of his earning after it is wrought for, and the curer will know with more exactness to deal with his merchant for the eight weeks of the prosecution of the fishing, during which period at present his price is hanging as it were on chance, and at a ratio of five, ten, fifteen, or twenty per cent. as the case may happen.

To the consideration of the above clauses in a new Act, others in the wisdom of Parliament may be added. Should it be resolved that no establishment shall exist under the name of Board, then it is only to withdraw those clauses connected with the Board, but, if it be thought well of, to maintain foreign opinion in its present estimation of the Scottish fisheries—if it is considered prudent not to unhinge that *opinion*—if the maintenance of that opinion is in favour of increasing an export from 100,000 barrels annually, to 200,000, or to 300,000; if the cost of keeping up that opinion can with every propriety be thrown

on the article itself, than for the particular purpose of throwing a peculiar protection over the whole act, and maintain a particular surveillance on all its clauses. It is difficult to argue against a small outlay of a couple of thousands per annum, and, besides, obtain through an authorised and responsible channel, the statistics annually pertaining to a most invaluable branch of national wealth.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

And the circumstances which have unfortunately been the cause in the last few years, of the former pressing severely and injuriously on the latter in the Herring Fishery.

THE prosperous condition of the herring fishery is undoubtedly impeded by the supply being greater than the demand. This worm is eating at the root of its prosperity. It must be got rid of, or its further growth will cease. Abundance of food, by the fiat of Providence, should be a blessing. When it is not so there is some mistake in the hands of men. The first great change affecting the demand was undoubtedly the loss of the trade with our West India possessions. This most desirable and profitable outlet was shut against the fishery by the Act of slave emancipation in the year 1833. Although it is not likely that remonstrance would have been productive of relief, yet little or none was made at the time. This was the more remarkable, as the loss of consumption fell on a quality of fish not probably so easily otherwise disposed of. The West India market was supplied annually with about 60,000 barrels, principally made up of the quality of fish known by the "spent" or "shotten" herring, or more plainly described as the herring after it has spawned. The large blank thus occasioned still continues; and till within a year or two of the non-existence of the trade,

twenty shillings per barrel on the spot was looked to as an average price, satisfactory to all parties.

The island of Jamaica had always been the chief mart, and several trials of the business continued to be made after the emancipation, but without that result which at the cost of production could be held as remunerative. The negroes have been inclined to lay out their wages on a better description of food. English hams have had the preference to salted fish. What of the latter is consumed is imported principally from their neighbours, the Americans. With the United States there is a considerable traffic in barter between fish, sugar, and molasses. This loss of demand has been a heavy drawback on the British curing interest. Breaking the chains of slavery must, however, be allowed to be in exact accordance with those principles of freedom, in carrying out which, Britain boasts, and justly so, of having taken the lead. In the next view of regretted change acting injuriously on demand, our sister island must be brought but too prominently on the canvas. Ireland has for years been unhappy in herself. Her rich resources have latterly become more and more paralyzed. It could not then be matter of surprise that her commercial relations with the coast of Scotland should by degrees suffer diminution.

It could not be expected that the food which the Irish formerly so largely took from us, and for which they liberally paid, should meet the fate of other articles of commerce. The trade in salted herrings has been much lessened, both in its amount of import and in the money value which the mass of the population could afford to pay. Ireland was wont to be

freely a customer for 100,000 barrels, and quotations from her markets ruled from 23s. to 25s. per barrel; a value at which a remunerative trade to Scotland could be carried on. This is now altogether altered. The disease which has devastated vast tracts of potato culture has pressed severely on the consumption of salted fish; and the Indian corn which, on its first introduction into Ireland was not much relished, has latterly become by use more agreeable to the appetite. This circumstance may continue to work unfavourably on the eating of salted provisions.

Notwithstanding the signal failure of these two great supports of Scottish industry, our herring fishery, in the gross quantity taken, has been on the increase. This increase has been taken off by home consumption; and this in by far the greater part in the quality of ungutted herrings. These are with a small exception manufactured into red. In the year ending April, 1830, the quantity packed ungutted, and coming under the notice of the Fishery Board was 48,623 barrels. In the year ending 5th January, 1848, 189,754 barrels. On this trade there has probably been a profit, indeed the support of the fishery must have sprung from the consumption in Britain; had it not been that from this source some return for labour and capital had been experienced, it is impossible that the increase of supply could have gone on. Our foreign trade with Northern Germany has advanced; but the question is, has it done so profitably for this country? To this must be given a decided negative. In latter years there has been no choice in the matter to the exporter. With a surplus produce, the consideration has been, not

where shall a profitable market be found, but where can a sale be effected, and on the readiest terms. The great mart of herring export to the continent of Europe, on the east coast of Scotland, lies between Peterhead and Wick; and there is no question but that, as circumstances at present govern supply and demand, this trade must be carried on at less than a productive value. It is almost unnecessary to affirm, that, had the trade with the colonies continued, and had Ireland preserved her prosperity, matters in the foreign trade would have assumed a different position. There is no other way of accounting for a losing trade being followed up than that parties brought up to the business, and having establishments formed, have endeavoured to persevere from a hope and belief that some beneficial change would take place. This has hitherto been denied; but that it can go on long with the same disposable amount of produce and the same result will be beyond the means of the capital employed. Either the fishermen must submit to a large diminution in the usual rate of payment, or a less number of boats must be engaged in the prosecution of the fishery, or a new outlet must be got at to take off at a remunerative price the present or increasing amount of produce. Taking it for granted that the intrinsic value of a barrel of bung-packed full herrings, in proportion to that of other food, in the curer's yard ready for shipment is 18s. per barrel, it can be imagined that the trade is carried on at a discount greater than it can long bear, when it is stated that many of the returns made from Stettin, in the past season, have been from 13s., 14s., and 15s. per barrel. The loss on the foreign trade at

stations from Peterhead to Wick, both inclusive, must, in the past season of 1848, have been most severe on many. A gross sum of £20,000 loss is considerably under the mark. As to Ireland, so low have her markets been, that 18s. per barrel ex store when landed, has been an average price, with freight and charges deducted, giving a nett return of 13s. and 14s. per barrel.

THE FOREIGN TRADE.

THE Foreign Trade in salted fish has, year after year, been of increasing value and growing importance. It may with truth be called the turning point of prosperity to this part of British commerce. The markets, however, which are at present open, and where the tariff is favourable to consumption, have too much to bear. In herrings, necessity obliges too heavy a pressure. The trade is forced into an unnatural state. Dealers abroad, merchants at home, and those having their capital embarked in the manufacture, are all thrown into doubt and difficulty, entailed by the uncertainty of each other's operations. The foreign trade in herrings was perhaps in the most healthy state during the eight or ten years which followed 1830. In that period there was not cured more than a sufficient quantity of the best and selected quality of fish, sent to Stettin and Hamburg. The German dealers then had confidence in this state of matters, and ordered freely for their wants through the agency of our commission merchants. There was no surplus stock left over to curers for consignment; and thus the Scottish herring fishery formed the basis of transactions, sound in principle, safe in their currency, and satisfactory in the result. To bring back this state of matters would be most desirable, but it is now

only attainable through a wider field for export. The burden of the catch has been for years thrown on Germany; and though the wants from this quarter have largely and progressively increased, yet the pressure of supply has been too great. Hundreds of cargoes have been, from other resources failing, thrown without calculation on the markets; former principles affecting the trade received a death-blow, and the idea has been engendered in Germany that the Scotch must send there a great part of the cure at whatever hazard and at whatever cost. There has unfortunately been too good a reason for a tendency to this opinion from the mode of operation. From the quantities sent to foreign markets on consignment, there has been a complete disarrangement on the most solid part of the business, namely, the buying on commission; and this cannot be expected to be fully rectified until the curing interest in this country is enabled by a wider field to suit the supply more conformably to the demand. Confidence in ordering foreign supplies will not be restored until, from practical experience, and an actual state of matters, it is found that the markets are not longer exposed to over gluts on consignment; the evils of which, it is evident as the sun at noonday, are incalculably great. The foreign trade in herrings deserves, therefore, the first consideration of the country. Treaties of reciprocity have been for some time abandoned. It has been experienced that there has been a difficulty, if not an impossibility, of adjusting them fairly to the interests of each nation. The British Legislature has taken the precedence in proving to the world that its statesmen are in future

to be guided by the consideration of national interest, compatible with that of every country over the globe; and if prejudices can be cleared away, the example thus set is likely to have the most convincing tendency. When the British minister of the day made up his mind to admit Norwegian herrings into this country, and into Ireland, at a moderate duty, the conviction arose, from inquiry into the bearings of the case, that he was acting for his country's good; or otherwise, any representation coming from the Norwegian minister of state would not have availed in bringing about a change of tariff so liberal, and perhaps at the time, so startling to the minds of those having their capital and skill engaged in the Scottish fishery. No mischief has as yet resulted from this liberality. The Norwegians have made trial of the Irish markets, but seemingly without that success in competition as to induce perseverance. Those maxims of commercial freedom have been promulgated abroad, which, sooner or later, may be the guidance of every people. In the benefit arising from carrying out this system, our fishings undoubtedly will largely partake. Many are sanguine that the spirit of free trade will become triumphant, though for a time encountering hindrance in its progress from the unsettled state, monetary or otherwise, of almost every civil government. This for a time will impede the growth of our foreign commerce in the article of fish, as in many others. Commerce, with its offspring capital, flies on being disturbed, which it always is when a new order of things by nations is sought after. In the farther opening of European markets for our produce, it may be relied

on that a similar idea of interest or necessity of operation must be awakened in the minds of European statesmen, previous to our wishes being fulfilled. To bring about this desirable object is a matter of no little difficulty; but a time of peace is the one favourable to drawing attention to those commercial subjects, rather than that of the influences of late so prevalent over Europe.

TRADE WITH PRUSSIA.

In the dominions of Prussia, and in the neighbouring States, the foreign consumption of Scotch herrings is the largest. The Germans are our best customers; and under the existing tariff the trade has been going on progressively for a number of years. The business with Germany has a solid foundation. As England imports sugar from Jamaica, tobacco from Virginia, and tea from China, so the good folks in Saxony, Silesia, Bohemia, and Bavaria expect their annual supply of herrings from this country. The salted herring is food which is liked for the properties considered to belong to it; and is relished by both rich and poor. When animal food is dear, and where it is not plentiful, and perhaps lean and not in good condition, it is true that the people will resort more to the salted fish; but in any locality, and under any competition with other means of sustenance, the herring will be bought and made use of when it can be had within the reach of moderate means. As the

curing interest in Scotland has thus a constant ready customer, the next desirable arrangement is that the market should be a profitable one. The returns made, however, from the ports of entrepot, have been too fluctuating, and on the whole unfavourable. The cause as has been stated lies with the exporter. A reduction in the value of the commodity is pressed upon the buyer by the manner and extent of supply. The rivers affording means of transport to millions favoured by their current are the Vistula, the Oder, the Elbe, and the Rhine. The ports of entrepot are, Rotterdam, Hamburg, Stettin, and Dantzig. Stettin, at the mouth of the Oder, has been the principal. By the Oder it commands the trade of Upper Saxony, the fine province of Silesia, and part of Poland. The import of Scotch herrings by Stettin in 1847 was 110,200 barrels. The Prussian import duty is one rix-dollar per barrel. The exchangeable value of a rix-dollar is two shillings and elevenpence sterling. This is a rate of impost which the article can bear, and which at an invoice price from this country leading to a cost at Stettin, freight and duty included, of 9 dollars per barrel, gives no hindrance to consumption. When the value at Stettin is below 9 dollars per barrel—when it is forced down to 8, and 7½ dollars—then, though the consumption be somewhat increased, the loss falls on Scotland, and the trade though to the advantage of Stettin as a port, becomes unhealthy to the home producer, taking the present fair cost of production at 18s. sterling, per barrel. The herring business is one in which the first mercantile firms freely engage, and it is rather a favourite

article of commerce to deal in. The Prussian port of Dantzig has not hitherto been of that importance to the Scottish fishery which, from its situation at the mouth of that noble river the Vistula, might have been expected. The healthy demand at the utmost has not exceeded from 8,000 and 10,000 barrels in one year.

The reason for this contracted amount must be connected with the condition of the agricultural inhabitants of Poland, for there cannot be a doubt but that an impulse would be given, provided they were flourishing and happy. The business is in the hands of the Jews, who on their return from delivering the wheat, occasionally venture on a limited investment in herrings. The Hanseatic city of Hamburg, on the Elbe, has ever been, in a greater or less degree, an entrepôt for the Scottish herring. The probability is, that its importance will yearly increase, because the duties on the Elbe, levied by Mecklenburg and Hanover, amounting to two shillings sterling per barrel, have been removed. The business of Stettin will be partly invaded, and it is likely that Magdeburg, Dresden, and Leipzig will draw their chief supplies by this route. The town of Hamburg levies a small import duty of one-half per cent., but then the voyage from Scotland is shorter; the freight will be a sixpence less per barrel, and a saving of insurance of one per cent. Hamburg is large and populous, and its inhabitants will consume 5 and 6,000 barrels per annum of Scotch herrings. It is not till within these few years that the name of the city of Rotterdam has been connected with the Scot-

tish fisheries. This has arisen from the Dutch government having consented to permit herrings from Scotland the freedom of transit to the Rhine.

On the part of Holland this has been a liberal concession. To this Britain is indebted for a new opening to the Rhenish provinces. The trade has not as yet assumed a weighty amount, but it is on the increase. The demand will be in this direction from 10 to 15,000 barrels. Upon the whole, owing to the moderate duty of the Prussian monarchy, Scotland has an outlet for about 150,000 barrels of herrings; and though, through mismanagement and an undue forcing of the business by the exporter, much of the business is done at a loss, yet Prussia must be considered as a valuable friend, and it requires but the same liberal spirit on the part of other European governments, in their tariffs, to bring the supply and demand with Germany into good working order. There is a transit duty on herrings carried through Prussia into Russia, Poland, Austria, &c., of one-half rix-dollar per barrel.

TRADE WITH RUSSIA.

THE amount of export from our Scottish fisheries to the great kingdom of Russia is but inconsiderable. A few thousand barrels of herrings find their way annually to Petersburg, principally early in the season, but the tariff is not yet at that favourable rate to admit the consumption at a price suitable to

the value of production. The government of Russia has, from time to time, been evincing a more liberal spirit. It has been promulgated, indeed, that the Emperor wished to assimilate the duties on British and Norwegian herrings, and if this were the case, it is a reduction which would be quite satisfactory. From what is known at present, however, there is a considerable preferential difference. The duty on Scotch herrings per barrel is, seemingly, one ruble and thirty copecs, equal to about 4s. 2d. sterling; whilst the duty of Norwegian, to the best knowledge to be arrived at is, per barrel, thirty-five copecs, or 1s. 6d. sterling. On a pood of salted fish, in weight about 36 lb. English, the duty three rubles sixty copecs. The Scotch barrel is rather larger than the Norwegian, and a trifle more duty might be afforded on the Scotch. Under a favourable tariff, there is some reason to think that Russia might be a consuming market for the second quality of Scotch cure. Russia, in her Baltic provinces, has no fishery of her own, and, therefore, the trade in fish is unshackled from any competition with national resource, whilst in her immense empire 100,000 barrels of herrings, more or less, would form but a trifling item in the budget of human sustenance. The capital of Petersburg is without the means of transport, to any great distance, into the interior by river navigation, but the Emperor is directing his attention to the laying down of railways, and this means of communication will do much to facilitate the intercourse with the provinces. Increased commerce will thereby carry with it increased civilization and increased civilization brings in its train a desire

for the wants of life in a superior degree. The quality of food becomes matter of inquiry, taste endeavours to be gratified, and thus as in other lands, the produce of the Scottish fisheries may be brought into estimation and request. Riga, the second port of Russia, in the Baltic has at its command the fine river Dwina. It is however navigated chiefly in the spring. Then the larger river craft arrive with flax, hemp, and timber, but they do not return; they are, on being unloaded, broken up and sold as timber. It is in the winter season that the supplies of salt and fish and other necessaries are carried by sledges over land into the interior. Of Norwegian herrings, the quantity used in Russia is very large, indeed the great bulk of the catch go to her markets, so that it is not an indifference to the food, but a matter of difference in the selling value which comes in the way of Scottish shipments, and to which a more favourable tariff has the likelihood of bringing relief.

TRADE WITH SPAIN.

ANY direct trade with Spain from our Scottish coast in fish of any description is unknown; from Shetland however, those engaged in the cod fishing, for the article in its dried state, have in Spain a good customer. Indeed in this branch the Spaniards are the sole foreign importers, and their markets would admit of increased supply. From the differential duties in Spanish ports between their own and British

vessels, those belonging to Spain have the carriage of the fish. The Spanish duty on herrings from Scotland it is found difficult to arrive at. It is so high as believed to be prohibitory, unless in Spanish vessels direct from the fishing ground. The duty on dried cod and ling is as follows:

Direct from the place of cure.

In Spanish vessels	£6	10	0	Ster. ℔ ton.
In British do.	8	13	0	do. do.

Indirect, or from a port not at the fishing ground.

In Spanish vessels	£10	0	0	Ster. ℔ ton.
In British do.	12	0	0	do. do.

It is thus truly remarked in a memorial from Shetland to the British government, that if a Zetland curer has not a whole cargo of fish to export to Spain, or cannot procure a Spanish vessel to come to those remote islands, and has to send his fish to London or Liverpool for transhipment, he would be subjected to a duty of £12 per ton, being equivalent to an ad-valorem duty of nearly 100 per cent. It is rather strange that the sherries and fruits of Spain, finding their best markets in Britain, should not incline the Spanish government to inquire whether a sounder policy should not dictate a relaxation of the duties on salted fish from Britain. It is difficult to come to any other conclusion than that if prejudices could be thrown aside and an impartial calculation entered into, it would be discovered that the commerce between the two countries might be safely enlarged on the true principle of international right—a liberal and free interchange of the gifts of nature from the

one to the other. Spain is a great fish consuming country, and it is rather extraordinary that the supply of the herring from Scotland should be denied to a population to whose taste this fish would be agreeable. The Spanish market takes off the finest quality of dried cod; the fish being quite transparent and of a pure greenish colour, well salted and highly dried.

TRADE WITH THE MEDITERRANEAN.

FROM the coast of Scotland, north of the Frith of Forth, there is no direct trade in fish with the Mediterranean. From Leith there is an export both of smoked and bung-packed herrings, of the latter cure chiefly to the island of Malta, a dependency of the British crown. The trade with the ports of the Mediterranean is in smoking herrings, and is possessed by the curers of Yarmouth. It must be annually to a considerable amount, for the export is carried on to Genoa, Leghorn, Naples, Sicily, Venice, and Trieste. The same system of high duty seems to predominate, it being, at Naples and Sicily, on a barrel of smoked herrings about ten shillings sterling per barrel, a fact indicating, in its consumption, the estimation in which the food is held, and certainly leading to the supposition that, with a moderate duty of about three to five shillings sterling per barrel, the demand would proportionally advance. The day may however come when it may seem desirable in the

eyes of every government to exempt articles of food from being a source of fiscal revenue. The Scottish fisheries in the north as yet derive no benefit from the Italian markets. This may follow from the season of the Scotch fishing in the months of July and August not suiting so well the time of consumption, that of the Yarmouth being in October and November, and Lent in these catholic countries being the period of demand. The Scotch herring curers have also generally speaking evinced a wish to persevere in the cure of white bung-packed herrings, and then, to send out a regular succession of cargoes, at the proper season, of smoked herrings requires a concentration of power and work for the purpose which the numerous establishments of Yarmouth can accomplish, and which would be difficult from the straggled position of the smoking houses along the north east coast to attain. Under more favourable tariffs, however, a cargo might be made up here and there, though it must be allowed from every information, that Italy does not present a hopeful field of operation, unless circumstances very much alter. Yarmouth is also a better starting point for the fast sailing schooners employed in the trade, and there is no doubt that the freight would be considerably enhanced from Peterhead and north of it.

CONSIDERATION OF THE ADVANTAGES OF OPENING THE MARKETS OF FRANCE AND BELGIUM.

IN treating of the good which would arise from a trade with neighbouring nations in the produce of our seas under moderate tariffs, it must not for a moment be supposed that a one-sided view of the matter can be taken. Though Britain's object may be to interchange freely with every country the produce of her fisheries, and though she has set the example of throwing aside prejudice and supposed interest in her late tariffs on provisions of every kind, still, if any barrier could be pointed out, sufficiently strong to prevent another country from dealing with us on favourable terms, then, in that case, it is not likely that Britain's wishes can be realized. Our neighbour, France, is the customer with whom it would be most desirable to have dealings for salted fish on an extensive and enlarged scale. She possesses thirty millions of inhabitants; and though having on three sides a sea coast, yet, in her western provinces there are doubtless thousands of inhabitants to whom salted fish, from their distance from the ocean, must ever be acceptable. France, it is well known, has annually fitted out a large fleet of luggers for a deep-sea herring fishery; but she has no shore or land fishing. Herrings do not abound on her

coasts. These luggers come into the North Sea as their fishing ground; and there is not a year passes but we have many of them at the harbours on the Scottish coast as buyers of herrings. Buyers, be it for whatever article or from whatever quarter, are ever and everywhere welcome. If these luggers instead of fishing choose to buy, and by so doing, rid our stations of some thousands of barrels, the transaction to Britain is good, and no doubt must be so to the adventurers or it would not be persevered in. The present French duty on Scotch herrings is altogether prohibitory, it being from £1 17s. to £2 sterling per barrel; and on fish, dried, salted, or smoked, there is no difference, giving of course a heavy protection to the fish brought in by their own luggers. It is very difficult to write on international affairs, but certainly without injury done to the French fishing boats, an equivalent might be given to France, for enabling our Scotch herrings to be sold over France on the same terms as their fishermen can at present bring in supplies. If the French government added to the amount of food now at the command of their advancing population 100,000 barrels of Scottish herrings without any evil arising to their own national interests, in the present enlightened temper of statesmen, there may be some hope that it can take place. The Scottish Fishery can offer France an additional quantity of desirable food to what it can procure itself. Great Britain will be contented to do this on terms, not of superiority or at a cheaper rate than the labour of their own fishermen can afford, but on terms of equality. To lead to this wished-for tariff it will be for the considera-

tion of British statesmen whether or not they ought not to break the ice farther by a remodelling of the wine duties. There are able men in France, able to treat this question without prejudice, men already fully impressed with the truth, that, in the friendly interchange between nations, of produce both of sea and land, lies one of the strongest bonds of union for he social feelings. In the northern part of Britain, during a former century, the clarets and wines of France were plentiful. Without inquiring why past policy has dictated a heavy import duty so as to exclude their use but from the tables of the wealthy, there is every reason to wish that the good old times should return. If our neighbours would resolve to treat themselves to an excellent Scotch herring, why, by all means let us have a bottle of good French wine, Bourdeaux, or Burgundy, at a price within the reach of moderate means. There is an old saying that "giff gaff makes good friends." Ere a hundred thousand barrels of Scotch herrings are permitted into France, it must be expected to be clearly shown to that people that it is their interest to do so. It is to be hoped that attention will be drawn to the subject. It may appear on fair examination that a supply of fish can be taken from Scotland, and wine in a larger proportion from France, with a result favourable alike to the material interest of both nations. A more favourable tariff on herrings with Belgium is also desirable. One is at a loss to conceive why its government is so adverse to receive a supply of food for a catholic population on easier terms. Belgium possesses but comparatively speaking a small extent of sea coast. It is true that she has also a small fleet of herring

busses fitted out annually for the deep sea fishing, and they also annually visit our coasts; but if the high protection is given to encourage them, then it will be found a dear method of supplying the inhabitants with this particular article of food. However, as it is wished to deal with France, so let it also be with Belgium. Let no injury be done to their fishing interest, but allow that the Scotch herring can be sold on the same terms as their own. This is all which perhaps could be looked for; and by temperate representation the Belgian government may feel inclined to alter their policy, and follow advantageously one that is more liberal. One would suppose that a time of peace and settled government, good-will betwixt nations, and a general feeling abroad that the peculiar product belonging to one country should be as freely as possible, with reference to national interests, be interchanged for that of another, are alone necessary for a yet extended commerce for the Scottish fishery. On this particular question, it will be wise policy in British statesmen to hold out the hand of good fellowship; for though our fisheries may be maintained, as they undoubtedly will to a certain, and, indeed, a very important extent, solely from the power of home consumption, still, if our neighbours are induced to open their markets, it would be stronger guarantee for rectifying and keeping in order the supply and demand. As before stated, the advantage cannot be entertained in a one-sided view; it must be mutual, but let no coolness or indifference be allowed on England's part to bring a matter of so great importance into a strong though impartial light.

HOME TRADE, INCLUDING IRELAND.

TO the Scottish fisheries the home trade, or, in other words, the consumption by the inhabitants of Great Britain is undoubtedly the most valuable. From this source springs the solid support of our numerous fishermen. By far the largest portion of sea produce is consumed in the metropolis, in the populous manufacturing districts of midland England, and in the other large hives of manufacturing industry, such as Glasgow, and where a large population is brought together, such as Edinburgh. There a great and ready market is ever open to every kind of food. Besides, the home trade embraces a dealing in every kind of produce, in every kind of manufacture, cure, or preparation, and in every quantity. For our salmon, iced—for our cod, both dried and pickled—for herring, salted and smoked—for the haddock, fresh and dried—for every kind of shell fish there is ever a customer. From the table of the rich, where delicacy is the aim, to the humble board of the poor where cheapness is the guide, there is a graduating scale, on the face of which there is a place for the consumer of every grade, for every value, suiting the taste as varied circumstances may demand. One source from which the Scottish fisheries in the home trade have derived great and last-

ing benefit is the navigation by steam, and another from which they would derive to a certain extent solid increase of prosperity, would be the completion of the northern railways.

The rapidity of traffic by railway enables fish to be carried in a fresh condition over a wide extent of country not less than from fifty to a hundred miles. The drawback on a continued line of distance might be in the cost of carriage being too burdensome for an article comparatively for its weight of not great intrinsic value. Still, the northern railways to the fisheries could not but prove of immense advantage, and even in this point of view must interest in their progress the hopes of the inhabitants in every fishing district. So wonderful are, indeed, the changes which locomotive power has already introduced, though probabilities may be mentioned, yet, they have in almost every instance been surpassed by the reality. The consumption through this source would be widely increased; and as too narrow a field is one of the evils, indeed, the great evil pressing on the industry, or rather, profitable use of the industry of the fisherman, so this may be considered one of the most sound and lucrative changes to which the prosperity of the fisheries has to look forward. The extent of our home trade and its consumption, it is difficult, indeed impossible, to arrive at; certain it is, that, in comparison to the export, it is as the whale to the minnow. In the first place, it may be said to take off the whole catch of the west of Scotland. In the second place, with the exception of a foreign export, chiefly to Spain, of about 11 to 12,000 cwts. of dried cod and ling, there is no other foreign export but of herrings,

and of this latter, of the total catch reported in the year ending 5th January, 1848, of 894,940½ barrels, there is a foreign export of 147,491 barrels. Of the balance of herring, ling, and cod, and of the whole of every other kind of fish, the inhabitants of England, Scotland, and Ireland are the consumers.

The trade with Ireland it has been stated is in a languishing condition; if there is deducted a consumption on her part, in the year ending 5th January, 1848, of 102,690 barrels of herrings, and of 14,176 cwts. of cod and ling, there is left for the consumption of England and Scotland 644,759½ barrels of herrings, and of cod, dried, 60,962 cwts., and pickled, upwards of 5000 barrels. These are startling facts. Well may an Englishman feel proud of the internal energy of his own country. And yet what is more wonderful to relate, even in the consumption of the 600,000 barrels, there is not more than about 20 herrings left annually for each inhabitant. In so far our fisheries are safe. This brings the pleasing recollection that all jealous feelings on the part of foreign nations should lie dormant. There is no room for any other opinion than that though an increased foreign trade might be of considerable benefit, yet the want of it in a broad point of view cannot vitally interfere with the existence of this great source of national wealth; whilst the knowledge of this valuable home trade may bring conviction of the extent to which, by liberal tariffs, there is a possibility of population being supplied with cheap and wholesome food.

Of the 600,000 barrels of herrings in home consumption, have, however, to be deducted, at least as

accounted for by the Board, under that head, and the Isle of Man, 297,660 barrels. The total amount of the Scottish fisheries will be about, therefore, 597,280 barrels. Taking from this the Irish and foreign export, amounting together to 250,181 barrels, will leave for home consumption for the Scottish fisheries about 347,099 barrels; thus clearly showing that the main prop to this branch of Scottish industry is in the kingdom, whilst a too limited field for the whole cure is deduced from the fact of the low prices returned annually from the Baltic, and from Ireland. If to the above immense consumption of herrings, of cod, and of ling, be added the whole of the salmon, and of the haddocks in a cured state, of which no statistical account can be given, and to this still be added the quantities used in a fresh condition, some vague idea may be formed of the wealth circulating in the country by the home consumption of this article of commerce. London alone is an ever yawning gulph for all kinds of fish which can be sent to it; and by its two millions of inhabitants, and those still on the increase, must continually stimulate the industry of thousands of our fishermen.

The import into Ireland of 100,000 barrels of herrings, is but a poor supply to a population of seven to eight millions, and that, for the greatest part, catholic. This can arise from no other cause than the depressed state of the country, but when this is to mend, it is not within the province of this work to inquire.

Regret may be expressed that the resources of the United Kingdom cannot bear equally on the common good.

PARTICULAR NOTICE OF SHETLAND AND ITS FISHINGS.

THE Shetland islands, from the numerous fine bays, harbours, and roadsteads, would seem to one arriving, and sailing through and past them. to be the marked out field for giving to less favoured localities the produce of the sea. The ling, cod, and tusk, as well as the herring fishery have long been the employment of the Shetlanders, it may be said almost as long as the islands have been inhabited. At present however, the fisheries are rather in a drooping condition, particularly that of the herring. By far the most attention is given to the cod and ling, and indeed it is the opinion of those who have given their mind to the subject, that it would be well if the herring fishery for a time was abandoned, and the whole energy and capital directed to the cod and ling. For the cod fishings, in addition to the smaller boats which are used in the spring, from the end of January to middle of March, the islands possess a fleet of fifty sloops, of twenty to thirty tons register, with crews of from eight to ten men each. These commence fishing, in the end of April or beginning of May, and continue till the 12th of August. They go to sea on Monday and return on Saturday. The success of the fishing is equally divided between the owner of the sloop and the crew, or in some instances

the latter get $\frac{1}{11}$ and the sloop $\frac{1}{11}$. In Spain there is a market ever open for the best quality of Shetland dried cod and ling; and, in the past season of 1848, the price was fairly remunerative, being from £15 to £16 per ton. The quality in these islands is excellent, and much esteemed; the progress of the cure in bleeding, cleansing, salting, and drying, being closely attended to. In Spain, the punching or marking the fish on the tail, gives it a marketable value, and where orders arrive for shipment this is specified as a guarantee between buyer and seller. In the fish which may be disposed of at home or in Ireland, the punching is for the most part dispensed with. The quantity of cod and ling given as exported from Shetland in the year 1847, was, to Ireland, cwts. 8120, and to places in Europe, cwts. 7822, the gross number of fish taken, 1,051,547; cured dried, cwts. 35,161. Of this quantity, cwts. 19,219, were consumed in England and Scotland, and of the whole cured there were found entitled to the official brand, cwts. 5817. Thus even from Shetland the home trade is still the great consumer, taking off, by the above statement, more than one half of the produce. The principal station for the herring fishery has been in former years in the vicinity of Lerwick. There the house of Messrs Hay and Co. have a magnificent establishment, both for its convenience and extent, affording the means of carrying on the fishings on a great scale. From the untoward state of matters however there is at present little done in the herring fishery. The next station which may be mentioned is that of Scalloway, pictured by the magic pen of Scott as the birth-place of Minna and of Brenda,

and the residence of that famous Udaller, the burly Magnus Trail. The supposed dwelling has for long disappeared, but the remnant of a garden still remains. The surrounding landscape of bays and islands on a fine clear day in August may indeed be called the beau ideal of island scenery. Here there are also curing houses on the most approved constructions. At Scalloway, for two seasons or three, there has been what may be called an early catch of herrings, beginning on the 20th June, and continuing till the 8th July, the catch in 1848, being about 1400 barrels. This fishing is likely to increase, the quality being excellent and suitable for the German early supplies. What may be called the later herring fishery, does not begin sooner than the middle of August, and continues to the middle of September, both on the east and on the west side of the islands. In August the quality of fish is mixed, and in September mostly lank or spawned. It is from this inferiority of fish that Shetland has to date the loss of the herring fishery. When the West India demand was taken away, then the fishery began to fall off, and so long as the fishermen are bound to fish for cod till the 12th of August, so long must the catch of herrings be exposed to inferiority of value. As remarked, this fishing has for years been dwindling away, and so unpromising is its present state that when the material of nets is worn out, it will not likely be renewed. It is carried on about twelve miles at sea from the outer islands, and is not prosecuted with profit at much less expense than at Caithness or along the shores of the Murray Frith. The Dutch commence fishing off Lerwick and its

neighbourhood on the 10th of June, and gradually with the season, work their way south. The fleet assembled in 1848, consisted of 105 busses. The following interesting particulars of past gone days in Shetland is from the pen of an esteemed friend. It is now about eighty years since the then head of an enterprizing firm took an active part in the fisheries of Shetland. He then acted as agent for the Irish wherries which came to fish ling on the coast, afterwards endeavouring to carry on that fishing by having vessels to accompany the native boats on their dangerous and distant employment. Afterwards about sixty years ago, the same party was interested in a company to prosecute the herring fishery on the coast in Yarmouth shallops. This adventure turned out unprofitable. About the same period, there was a large export of ling and cod from Shetland to the Mediterranean, nearly the whole of which for many years fell into the hands of the same firm and its connexion. From the same mind of enterprize about forty years ago, arose the idea that decked vessels rather than boats should be made use of, and accordingly a vessel of 32 tons was built to try the cod fishing with hand lines, being the first attempt of the kind. So much success attended this adventure, that there were at one time 100 vessels belonging to the islands, of from 15 to 50 tons, engaged in it. Fish becoming scarce, however, so year after year the number fell away. With an unproductive fishing, capital will not remain. A greater zeal in fishing industry was yet evinced in Shetland. On the passing of the Act of Parliament in 1809, awarding bounties in succeeding years, four vessels of 80

tons each were fitted out for the deep-sea herring fishing, one of them a regular Dutch dogger with a Dutch skipper, and three Dutch fishermen in each vessel. There were unfavourable circumstances however attending the adventure. Cordage was at the unprecedented price of six guineas per cwt., whilst barrels, provisions, and every thing necessary were at exorbitant rates. The outlay of capital was too heavy for the gain, and after a perseverance of a few years the prudence of retiring from the business was necessitated by a large amount of loss. It may thus be seen what can be accomplished by the spirit of one individual, and what energy will do, though not always successful in the result. The year of the heaviest herring fishery in Shetland was 1834. In that year, 60,000 crans were brought on shore, but every season since it has become less, and may not at the present day exceed a tenth of that quantity. From opinion formed on twenty years' experience, entitled to respect, it is considered that the genius of Zetlanders is not towards boat herring fishing, and that in the islands it will not succeed. The fishermen being small holders of land, the more certain avocation of husbandry along with the cod fishing, occupies their attention in the summer, whilst in autumn the weather breaks, the sea becomes boisterous, and the fish being in a large proportion then of an inferior quality, the boat fishing becomes dangerous to life and unprofitable. The islands of Unst and Walls come next to the mainland in importance connected with the fishery. The house of Messrs Anderson and Co., the head of which is the present member for the county, have their establishment on

one of the smaller islands, and have long been extensively engaged in the trade with Spain. Arthur Anderson, Esq. M.P. has shewn, by a large capital invested, by an active endeavour to bring the cod and ling fishery to the highest character in the Spanish markets, and also by his numerous writings, a lively interest in the welfare of Zetland and of Orkney.

Bilboa, in the north of Spain, is the chief port of import of the produce of Zetland. Lerwick, the chief town of these islands, is pleasantly situated at an extremity of the mainland, on the southern shore of Brassy Sound. This beautiful arm of the sea forms one of the safest and largest harbours belonging to the British Crown. It has a circumference of miles, its water is protected from every gale, and the sixty-gun frigate will float as easily on its bosom, as the more humble cod sloop of fifty tons. Zetland partakes now of the benefit of steam navigation, and is in weekly communication from Lerwick with the metropolis of Scotland for the best part of the year. Thus the tourist and the man of business have an eligible opportunity of carrying out in the far north the ends either of pleasure or of commerce. Allusion in this work has been made to the unequal duties which circumstances impose on the officers under the Board of Fisheries. If some officers have had rather little to do, the name of a gentleman may be mentioned—Mr. Bannatyne, at Lerwick, who is perhaps a solitary instance of having too much. He has an island district of eighty miles to superintend and visit. There are few roads, and he has to trudge in winter as in summer, for the punching of the cod, as he best can on the back of what is known in the

south by the characteristic appellation of Shetland pony. No one could be more zealous and attentive in the performance of his duties than Mr Bannatyne.

PARTICULAR NOTICE OF ORKNEY AND ITS FISHINGS.

In Orkney, over the Islands, there are annually about 600 boats engaged in the herring fishery, a diminution of at least 200 of what they had formerly. At Stronsay, the principal station, there are about 240. The other stations of consequence are, Deer, Sound, and Buria in South Ronaldsha. The curers are not numerous. Most of them come for the fishing season from Rothsay and the west of Scotland. The fishermen are cottars with small patches of land. Each farmer is obliged by his lease to maintain by receiving their labour a given number of them in proportion to the size of his farm. This is found to work most unfavourably on the pursuit of fishermen, and this the more particularly, as the fishing must be left on any day of which the farmer may give notice of his harvest being ready. As the time of harvest is often the chief time of fishing, this clause of bondage prevents an engagement as to price between fisherman and curer. A curer, however desirous, could not enter into a bargain, whilst it was in the power of a third party to annul it. The consequence is, that the price for green fish cannot be, and is not finally fixed till the fishing is concluded; a circumstance which is much complained of, and which is

considered detrimental to farmer, to cottar, to fisherman, and to curer.

Nature seems to have intended the various groups of islands as the favoured shelter of man in the prosecution of the fishery. The tides, it is true, run strong and oftentimes in an unsuitable direction. To those, however, who had skill, the proper size of boat, and sufficient material, and who could indefatigably devote their energies to the trade of fishing during the whole year, the Orkney Islands would seem to be the place for the repayment of their toil.

The station of Stronsay is particularly adapted for carrying on the fishing on a large scale. There is a fine land-locked harbour, with two entrances, and a good depth of water, capable of containing in perfect safety many hundred boats. It is seldom, also, that in the surrounding islands, protection or shelter from the weather is not to be found, and there are few nights pass when ground for fishing in one direction or another cannot be arrived at. The duration of the cod fishing in Orkney is from beginning of May till the first of July, and thus does not interfere, as at Shetland, with the herring fishery. The cod fishery is considered more remunerative at Orkney, than the herring. At Kirkwall, the chief town of Orkney, agreeably situated on the mainland, and with a tolerable harbour, no kind of fishing is prosecuted, indeed, the supply of fish for the townspeople is irregular, and frequently left to any tradesman who occasionally may have a fancy for the craft.

The total number of barrels of herrings cured in Orkney, in the year ending 5th January, 1848, is for the north Isles, 4,253, and for the south, 9724. Of

these were assorted and branded *full*, 165 barrels, indicating clearly that the cure is made up for Ireland, or for home consumption, where the official brand has lost its importance, affording another proof that its value rests with the foreign demand.

In the year ending 5th January, 1848, there were cured, dried, of cod and ling, in the north Isles, 5332 cwts., and in the south Isles, 1153 cwts., of these received the official brand, 1538 cwts., were exported to Ireland, 85 cwts., and to places in Europe, 427 cwts. By these statistics is gathered additional convincing evidence of the magnitude and importance of home consumption.

LEWIS AND ITS FISHINGS.

In the island of Lewis, of late years, there has sprung up a considerable spirit for fishing adventure. For the herring fishery it appears to be favoured with ground to which the fish are attracted at an early period in the spring, or it may be indebted to its insolated northern position, for the visits of the shoals sooner than the mainland. However this may be, it is certain that the early vicinity of the fish has proved an attraction too strong to be denied indulgence by speculative desire. This loadstone has been so powerful, that the stranger as well as the native has yielded to its influence. Not only the boats belonging to the island seek after the prize in the beginning of May, but fishermen from the Moray

Frith set out annually on a Stornoway expedition. The end in view may in this case be said to be defeated by the means. The result in view is an extravagant value in the Baltic. But, as an unripe pear has no sweetness, so a May-caught herring has neither taste nor flavour. Real interest is sacrificed at the shrine of impatient cupidity.

It is the general and fixed opinion, that the future prosperity of the Scotch herring fishery should be fostered and promoted by a close season. For the first casting of the herring net, the 1st of June will likely be proposed to be appointed by legislative enactment. In this salutary change, let not the capitalists of Stornoway annoy themselves by fear of injury. The profit will be to them as to others. They know well how frequently disappointment has been encountered, and sanguine expectations thwarted from the unripeness of the fish. Their June supplies will still be amongst the first at market. The reward of a high price will then be justly earned. The German consumption will assume a healthy tone from the commencement, and when opinion thus goes in favour of the quality, the desire for the food becomes general, and the high price is submitted to with cheerfulness, until the larger supplies from the general fishing begin to arrive.

Under the annual report of the Fishery Board, the islands of Lewis and Barra form one district. In the west of Scotland, it is the most considerable in the cod and ling fishery. In the year ending 5th January, 1848, the number of fish taken is given at 409,686, producing of dried cod and ling, 15,288 cwts. Of this large quantity, there was but 640 cwts. exported to

Ireland, and none to places in Europe, so that the home market appears again as the fisherman's best friend. No part of the cure received the official brand. Of herrings in the same year, there were caught a total of 6000 barrels. Of these none were branded. This fact indicates that the fish caught after the early fishing are not made up for a foreign market, indeed, it would seem that the months of June and July will be those for the fishing of herrings in the island of Lewis. Deducting the few thousand barrels sent of late years, in May and June, to the Baltic and to Hamburg, then the quantity left for later catch has been but inconsiderable, and most probably finds its way to Glasgow or to Ireland. Properly prosecuted, however, the herring fishing in June and July, may become exceedingly valuable, in which the home or native boats will more largely participate than the stranger, the latter being under the necessity of returning about the first of July to prepare for the general Moray Frith fishing. Stornoway has a safe, capacious, and excellent harbour, fitting in depth of water, and in easiness of access, to carry on any commerce to which the rising fortunes of the island may arrive, either in Agriculture, Manufacture, or fishing. Stornoway has a weekly communication by steam with Glasgow, and the island is the property of James Mathieson, Esquire of Achany.

OUR FISHERMEN,

THEIR HABITS—THEIR ARDUOUS AND DANGEROUS EMPLOYMENT—THEIR REMUNERATION.

THE fishermen inhabiting the eastern coasts of the north of Scotland have ever had peculiarities of social life belonging to their own class. They intermarry among themselves, and thus the habits of one generation fall naturally upon that of the succeeding. It is seldom that the sons follow any other trade but that of the sea, either as fishermen or sailors; generally passing their life part in the capacity of each. They are trained from their earliest years to the management of the boat, and to the baiting and casting of the line. They thus in their manhood become skilful in their craft. The girls, again, rarely leave the village of their birth; they grow up accustomed to all the household duties in practice by their mothers. To them is also given in charge, the selling of the fish for country and local consumption; and the carrying of the creel becomes a burden of pleasant endurance, from the acquaintance they form with it even almost from the cradle. In their faithfulness, as wives, they are proverbial; and a young fisher lass thinks not of having any other for a sweetheart but one of those in the village, whom she has been led to believe, from a long associ-

ation of ideas, to be the best, the truest, and the bravest.

A close examination of fishing life will be convincing that to follow the craft successfully, properties of existence are required of a peculiar kind. For the chequered details of ocean labour, certain qualities, mental and corporeal, are essential. The man who ventures from day to day on the briny deep must have mental courage combined with physical strength. The mind is incessantly occupied with the change of surrounding atmosphere, whilst the muscular hand and arm must be as constantly ready for the oar, the rudder, or the sail. When the unfriendly gale comes on to the attack, self-possession is the saving power, the keen quick eye and the experienced remembrance following to the rescue. In the morning's calm again—when the mighty sea is redolent of beauty, and all nature has assumed a peaceful and unruffled aspect, a quiet which fond fancy could wish would bear no change—then comes into active play the skill acquired in years of early servitude, and matured to perfection by the practice of after life. A thorough-bred fisherman is distinguished by attributes—moral, mental, and physical. This test is found decisive, when compared with those whose energies are divided, and who live in the attempt to give one portion of their time and intellect to the land and another to the sea. The feelings of the ploughman, and those of the master-spirit of the waves do not sympathize together. The peaceful tiller of the ground has no thoughts in common with him who hoists the sail and gives his guidance to the wind. The fisherman's time on land is a continuance

of the ocean's dream. The husbandman, whose toil is over, sinks into undisturbed content. The pastime of the one is in speaking "of the dangers he has passed," that of the other, "how many days his sheep have been with young." In the Western Highlands of Scotland and in Sutherlandshire, in Orkney and in Shetland, the cottar system has not worked well. It would be for the best interests of those parts of the Scottish coasts, where the system has existed, could it be abrogated. This must rest primarily in the determination of proprietors. Perhaps it is a difficult matter for them to bring about, satisfactorily, a change of the kind. As matters, however, at present stand, the advantage derived from fishing, it must be acknowledged, is not what it might be, whilst the labour employed for half the year, on a few acres of land, cannot bring it to that state of cultivation, properly remunerative either to landlord or tenant. Attention has been long ago drawn to this subject, and has doubtless occupied the serious consideration of landowners. The evil is felt but the remedy is difficult of appliance. A different allotment of the land presents itself as one part of the cure, and an encouragement to youth to prosecute the fishing even from their boyhood upwards, looking upon it as their sole occupation, must be another. From this last alone can flow the healthy possession of proper and fixed capital in boats, nets, and fishing gear. To give is not so wholesome as to create; and that which is earned by industry is ten times more valued and set store by than that which is come at through the agency of others, in a gratis shape, however accompanied by patriotic intention

the gift may be. With time and perseverance, the day may arrive when the fisheries will altogether be in the hands of men, similar in their determination —from one day to another and from one month to another—to fishing pursuit, as those on our eastern coast. A redundant population is thus more likely to be provided for. There should also be none of what are known by the name of *hired men* employed in the herring fishery. The fisherman begin to be of this opinion themselves. The men come from a good distance, in some instances more than a hundred miles from the Highlands, to fish for the season at Peterhead and Fraserburgh. Their earnings, poor fellows, will not come on an average to more than £4 or £5. They can do themselves little or no real good. They are not so skilful or so hardy as the fishermen of the country, and therefore the real interest of the fishery, by this custom, is not served. Strong they certainly are, but strength in this pursuit is but one quality. Fewer boats and properly manned, is finding its way as the real principle to be acted on. The doing away of this custom is also the real plan to increase the number of men on our coasts, who will dedicate their sole mind and energy to a fishing life.

Perhaps in the world generally it is not thought of how constant and intermitting the toil of the Scottish fishermen is, particularly during the eight weeks of the herring season. In every seven nights, they are but two in bed, on the Saturday and Sunday. During the other five, they may have a little slumber, for an hour or two in the middle of the day; this is from the time the nets are sent into the fields

to dry, till when they have again to be collected and carried to the boat. The unquiet and restless closing of the eye, induced by fatigue, in a moment of rest at the fishing ground, partakes but little of the good of nature's sweet restorative—the bare bank of the boat, the couch—the canopy of heaven, for covering. When the herring fishing is over, and the fisherman with his family is returned to his own habitation, he has to set out for the muscle ground for the winter's bait; this accomplished, the hook and line is got in order for the haddock. In this fishing there is more rest than in that of the herring, yet the cold and wintry weather of November and December has to be encountered. In the spring cod and ling fishing, there is again a longer absence from their home. The open boat forms again the lodging for the night. For this latter fishing, as it is carried on at a distance from the land, and assumes the character of the deep sea, there would seem to be matter for just opinion that greater comfort and greater protection should be afforded. If the decked sloop, of 20 tons and upwards, is to be fitted out here is the fitting use. Additional safety would thus, undoubtedly, be given to the voyage of several days, and there is as little question that the success of the fishng would be improved. Lessen the hazard, and the power to carry out the labour would be increased. Should the fishermen themselves resolve to make the trial, there is strong hope that a happy result would follow. But in their hands it certainly would be safer than in those of any speculator. Self-interest would bring self exertion more willingly and more energetically into play, and all the arrangements and material more carefully looked after.

As to the payment for the toil which the Scottish fisherman endures, in this there can be no complaint. In the herring fishery, for the last ten years, the price paid for the cran of green fish will be rather understated to have averaged from eleven to twelve shillings. In the cure of herrings, the cream of the transaction has fallen to the fisherman's share. The productive value and the consuming one have been at variance. In this, however, there lies no fault with the fisherman; the market for his labour is an open one. It is the business of the buyer, equally with the seller, to estimate the risk of dealing in the engagement of herring boats; in the bargain between fisherman and curers, there has ever been a restlessness and hastiness belonging to no other trade. On the curer's part, there is a want of individual decision of mind. They do not act from their own conviction, but from the practice of their neighbour. Thus the error is continually committed of buying too dear, and therefore subjecting themselves to sell too cheap. The fishermen endeavour to make the most of this, and almost universally succeed. They are never outwitted, but generally outwit. In calm calculation of the capital invested in a boat and nets —of the tear and wear—of the support of four men with their families for eight weeks, and then a parting into fourths of something over for extra labour, to which the fisherman certainly is entitled, there is a rate of payment below which it is injurious to the general interest to propose. The fisherman being the centre wheel of the general movement his remuneration should be generous rather than contracted. A sum of money to send a crew to the

herring fishery, fully and efficiently equipped, is required of from £120 to £130. Upon this, interest, and tear and wear, upon £130, will be £19 10s. The maintenance of four men for eight weeks, at 15s. per week each, will be £24, making together a sum of £43 10s; or if, to cover any extra charges, ground for nets and driving, £50 be placed against the fishing, the calculation will be about fair. To cover this amount of actual expenditure at 11s. per cran, a catch of ninety crans will be necessary. But, as the highest value of boats and fishing gear, with four regular fishermen on board, has been the ground of calculation, so must also be taken the highest average of catch. Let this then be given at 150 crans, and there is seldom a season passes when a good crew with a full fleet of nets will be below that quantity. At 11s. per cran, these crans 150 gives £82 10s., or a sum above the current expense of £32 10s., which divided into four, is about £8 per man. Of course the above is written for the purpose of giving some general idea of how matters upon a certain data stand with the fisherman in the herring fishery. It is perfectly well known that many a boat goes to the herring fishing not worth stock, lock, and barrel—£100—and many not reaching in saleable value, even the half of that. Then instead of the adventure being divided into fourths, how often is arithmetic pulled into tatters in all the various parts of a boat-ownership, The success too naturally varies with the ability to deserve it, and dame fortune has also a hand in the pie. When 200 crans are caught, there is a merry return to the home camp, and when by the lucky stroke of circum-

stance, that quantity is exceeded, the highest prize in the lottery is gained, and a golden opportunity afforded for laying by considerable store against a future blank. The catch of the herring is valuable to the Scottish fisherman, as it takes place at a time when most other fish are out of season. Without this friend, the employment in July and August would be dull indeed.

The winter haddock fishing, as now prosecuted for the supply in a smoked state of the southern markets, on a great part of the eastern coast, must be felt by the fishermen a source of certain employment, which in former days he only experienced as fluctuating and insecure. The haddock fishing has a superiority of comfort belonging to it, that is, on the coast opposite the fishermen's own dwelling, and that, during its continuance, he enjoys the convenience and comfort of his own fireside. In its working it is less expensive than the herring, whilst the price paid for his labour is not proportionally reduced. At the upper part of the Murray Frith, 4s. per cwt. with a daily catch of from six to ten cwt. will be found to a boat's crew as affording the means of comfortable subsistence; whilst, in the Cullen district, 11s. 6d. for 154 fish is at the rate of within a fraction of a penny for every fish, large and small—this price too under an engagement for the whole season. For the most part on the east coast the curing of dried cod is carried on on account of the fishermen themselves. Towards the summer when the cure is completed, they generally proceed south with them, and effect sales as they best can, bringing back with them some of the more bulky necessaries of life, such as coals, &c. In

this manner they have the whole of what their industry in this fishing may produce. Upon the whole, the majority of Scottish fishermen, who are frugal, industrious, persevering, and skilful, alluding to those on the coasts who make the fishing their sole occupation have a lot amongst the general population of this country rather above the average in point of the receipt of money, though from the nature of the labour given it may not on the whole be overpaid. That there is much comfort intermixed with a good deal of poverty in the larger Scottish fishing villages is evinced from the interior of the dwellings. In many a cottage, the "but end," as it is called, has every thing of the best; there the eye is gratified by the most inviting of beds for the stranger, the mahogany chairs and chest of drawers, and all the other corresponding articles of furniture, betokening the reward of thrift and industry. In the other or more common end, there is every thing useful and necessary for the daily affairs of domestic life, whilst an array of Staffordshire ware stands on a bench opposite the fire-place, exhibiting the taste and fancy of the goodwife in a plenitude of variety, dazzling to the eye of the visitor and flattering to the vanity of the amiable possessor.

Amongst suggestions which have been recommended for the purpose of adding to the comfort and well-being of the Scottish fisherman, has been that of mutual insurance, against total loss at sea, of boats and material. If any plan could be formed and carried out by which this could be accomplished, much capital would be preserved and some provision created in the day of need. A calculation has been

made, that if each boat or crew going to the herring fishing between Berwick and Cape Wrath, including the island of Lewis, might be insured against total loss of boat and material, from the first of June to the end of September, on the payment of the sum of five shillings, to the amount of £50; and that along the west coast from Cape Wrath, each boat might be insured for a like period of fishing, on payment of two shillings and sixpence, to the amount of £25. The fund, indeed, on an average of years would likely accumulate; but this might periodically be applied particularly in assisting young fishermen who may have been left orphans by casualty at sea, to procure boats and other fishing gear for their trade. To bring into effect this plan, however, it would have to become compulsory on every crew to make the payment stipulated; and, without the interference of a government order to this effect in one shape or another, it is certain that the object would be frustrated by the objections of many and the evasion of others. If the fishermen themselves would take the matter keenly up, something might be done either in the way of district societies or otherwise. But it must be confessed that so long as they lie dormant in a scheme, so necessary to be supported by their goodwill and active co-operation, there are difficulties in detail which will leave the affair in the catalogue of wishes and not in the list of realities. Savings' Banks are now very generally established along the coast, but almost with their management in the towns. They have done and are doing much good. An increase of their number might very advantageously take place in many of the fishing villages, when near-

ness for opportunity to small deposit is always an incentive to further thrift. Education also, though progressing in the better class of our fishermen's families in the same ratio as in the other orders of society, is not sought after, or its advantages so universally applied as could be desired. In many localities there is room for additional instruction, but here again, in any voluntary movement—to create a fund to assist in educating the orphan or those whose parents from misfortune are not so well able—the initiative should come from the fishermen themselves. A plant when forced into a soil not suitable for its growth struggles for a while and then dies away. So would it be with educational aid or charitable funds created for the benefit of any particular class without the hearty co-operation of that class itself. Therefore, in this point of view the fishermen must be left to go along with the age. They will partake of any benefit arising from an act of legislature pertaining to education, and applicable to every class of the community; and so, unless springing from their own voluntary efforts, any recommendation or pleading in their peculiar favour would not have much chance in the present day of divided opinion to be patiently or successfully listened to. His Grace the Duke of Sutherland, the largest proprietor of fishing coast in the kingdom, has evinced his sense of the value and importance of Savings' Banks, by the establishment of one in Sutherlandshire, with three branches—one for the northern, one for the southern, and one for the western district of the county. His Grace has also settled schools in different parts of the coast, and has been much occupied

in their success, which has, it is believed, been everything which a patriotic mind could desire. This is, however, the appliance of princely means to the best of ends, and may be named as an exception, and not to be expected in others where circumstances of place and opportunity do not present themselves in the same necessary light. The Scottish fisherman from the bearing of his position, has his mind a good deal tinctured with prejudice, leading in many matters to obstinacy of opinion, but in the active qualities of mind and hand necessary to his craft he is superior to most. He has a general respect for the laws of his country, and amongst any other faults has never been found in his simple escutcheon the flaw of disloyalty to the Crown.

SUMMING UP OF THE VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF THIS GREAT BRANCH OF NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

THE wealth which has been described a spouring itself into the country, ramifying itself chiefly over the North of Scotland, branching itself as it were into little rivulets refreshing in their flow every corner of the land—affecting, indeed, more or less the annual revenue of every inhabitant—forms a powerful motive for the good wishes of every philanthropist and the active exertion of every statesman towards the prosperity of the Scottish fisheries. Added to this the fisheries possess an interest in the national mind in the increasing intellectual as well as physical improvement of a numerous class. A flourishing trade tends to the increase of population. The character of that population is of the first importance; and that the character of our fishermen is more likely to be improved and bettered under prosperity than in comparative adversity the experience of every moralist will amply bear out. It will be well for the future history of the industry and commerce of this great country if the export of the produce of our seas goes on progressing over the greater part of the European continent. Though in the home consumption of Great Britain is found the

largest and most certain resource for the reward of Scottish industry, yet it is equally true that much of the life and enterprizing spirit of the fisheries springs from the foreign demand.

Of the different produce of our sea the herring is unquestionably the most valuable. This may seem at first view a bold assertion, but facts will bear it out. The Scottish salmon fisheries have undergone changes in the manner and place of capture which would appear tending seriously to affect the formerly prolific condition of the rivers; and this being allowed, it is doubtful if the sea fishings will not also gradually diminish; but there is another circumstance in a commercial point of view lessening the value of the salmon in those great marts where, in bygone days, it stood so high in estimation. This circumstance is the rivalry created by the supplies from Norway, from the Rhine, and from Ireland. Thus has the Scottish salmon fishery now to run the race of general competition, which, however welcome it may be to the consumer, has certainly produced a more than corresponding change on the estimated or productive worth of this national branch of income. In the cod fishings which surround our Island, they have again to meet the concurring activity of the great bank of Newfoundland, and also that of a flourishing and most productive fishing at Iceland prosecuted successfully by the French. But the Scotch herring fishery, in its character as a land or shore fishery, in its being regularly established on its present footing for nearly half a century, in its excellence of management, in the characteristic qualities of its fishermen for hardihood of purpose, in the moderate cost of pro-

duction, and in the amount of produce, has no competitor. The once famed Dutch fishery, so enriching in its annual gain that its Amsterdam was said to have been built on herring bones, has been shorn of its greatness chiefly, it may be presumed, from the extremely high price entailed upon it by the operations of capture in the deep sea, and also by the injurious influence of a monopolizing spirit attached to it by the commercial principles acted on by the Dutch governments. The Norwegian herring fishery is occasionally large in amount, but as the great burden of the catch falls in the winter season the quality of the fish suffers from poverty of condition pertaining to that period of the year. In every respect the Scottish fishery bears a higher character than the Norwegian. There is to be sure, caught in Norway, in summer, what is called the fat herring; and this may be the closest rival which the Scotch has; but it does not at present materially interfere with the interest of the curers of this country.

In the foregoing work, the author has made use of the only statistical authority relating to the fisheries in the possession of the public. That this annual report from the commissioners might be more detailed, if not on the whole more comprehensive, may be, perhaps, without depreciating its general importance, be advanced. It is a report, however, without which but an imperfect idea could be formed of the growth or decrease in this interesting and particular branch of industry. It enables the inquirers to discover the channels in which the currents of commercial transactions run; it opens to the view the state of matters in a broad sense, both

as to amount of capital and of labour, and it furnishes the mind with some conception in numerical detail of both export and import. It is from a knowledge of the numbers and quantities correctly laid down that a solid reasoning can be followed out, and a persuading influence made use of the reality of wealth conferred by the fisheries on every class of the community. If the general reader is made acquainted that so many hundred thousand barrels of herrings and so many thousand cwts. of cod fish have been caught on our coasts, it recurs to reflective thought what a mass of wholesome and nutritious food has been secured from the harvest of the sea. One thinks of the labour which must have been called into activity—one considers that so much timber, so much flax and hemp, must have been manufactured—that so much salt has been imported—that so many acres of land have been enriched—that hundreds of our sailors have had to lift the anchor in the freightage —that thousands of pounds of the circulating medium of the country have found an opening for their use—that this circulation, in its windings and its turnings, in its flowings and its ebbings, has reached the hands of the butcher and of the baker—of the tailor and of the shoemaker—of the grocer and of the dealer in hardware—of the dealer in broad cloth and of him whose bargains lay in muslin and in silk—of the tradesman and mechanic of every grade—returning from them to the aid of science, of literature, and of every useful art; doing good alike, as well to the learned as to the ignorant, to the rich as to the poor, and contributing an interest, from the kindly influence of which no subject of Her Majesty can declare

himself free, or to the prosperity of which no right thinking heart can remain callous or indifferent. In the catalogue of attempted legislative change before the British Parliament is the relaxation of the Navigation Laws. It will not be considered presumptuous to pass a modest opinion, that, in a liberal policy being followed, there is probability that the Scottish fisheries will thereby benefit—meaning that, if foreign powers experience any new employment for their marine in the freightage of salted fish direct from our coasts, such may become an influential motive for a reduction of duty. France, Spain, and the other southern states may then follow the example of Prussia. This is not meant to be an opinion unfavourable to the interest of the British shipowner. It is merely suggested that a trade might be opened up where at present there is none. It could not exclude from or take away any privilege now in possession, and this is supposing that the law is altered, not from a consideration of any class interest, but from the best of argument, proving that general good without particular injury may be expected. If it is thought that England, by aid of her coal, her iron, and her old British oak, can maintain a competition in the race, under expected change, then it is not unlikely that the smaller harbours in the Moray Frith may be visited by the white sail of Leghorn and of Venice. One galliot may have painted on the stern the name of Marseilles, her neighbour that of Bourdeaux, and the flag of Spain may become as common as that of the free city of Hamburg. It is impossible to deny one's self the hope that the supply and demand belonging to a branch of commerce for which

there is every element in abundance for prosperous increase may, through the agency of international advantage, be brought again to act, the one so in favour of the other, that capital may forsake its hiding-place, that the spirit for fishing enterprize may receive a fresh impulse, and that at many of the stations where of late years the falling off has been so great, the din of the cooper's hammer may once more be heard in full activity.

If this much-wished-for state of matters should be come at, and if then accompanied by that act of mercy of which mention has been made—namely, if two harbours of extent were formed at points of the coast which the state of the fishings most demand, for which the boats might run and enter with safety, under the prevalence of the worst of weather and at any hour of the day or night—then the Scottish fisheries may, like the tough oak tree, retain firmly the hold they at present have, and continue to form a distinguished part of national wealth. Their future progression may be rendered not longer a circumstance of chance, but one of certainty, based on the natural principles of the scarcity of one country being rectified by plenty in the other. In a highly taxed country the wisdom of saving in expenditure cannot be questioned, but it is also true that in outlay there may be a gain, for how is otherwise to be accounted for the many noble and magnificent public works in Britain's isle? In the expenditure of half a million on the harbours on the Scottish coast not only the Scottish fisheries will be blessed, but the navigation of the world will hail it as a boon to the saving of life and property. From Europe to America many a hardy sailor will then

sleep sweetly in his cot where formerly the dread of being thrown upon our rugged and unfriendly coast made the dark hours of night a misery, and the coming day a doubtful refuge.

In the expenditure of half a million, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer might not be able to show a direct return in pounds, shillings, and pence, still, in the opening up, and in the strengthening the resources of the country, a sum far surpassing common interest would return indirectly to the public treasury. Let the philosophic mind of the now minister of the Crown be but fairly interested in the matter, and he may rely that in so generous and so much-called-for a scheme being carried into execution he will be supported by the general voice of the country, and this the more particularly should it be found that in the reduction of expense attending the Board of Commissioners for British fisheries a large sum is provided as interest out of the existing grants —a grant too large for its present use, but not so by any means to foster and protect, when properly directed, a creative power of much national wealth.

The clauses which the author ventured to suggest for part of a new Act of Parliament for the fisheries will, he trusts, be found on inquiry to be sound and wholesome—necessary and useful. A close season for the herring fishery will give a character to the quality of the produce, much more to the purpose than any official brand. It will become known in every market that it is illegal to catch when the fish is in a condition not suitable for cure; and this will stamp the barrels with the mark of confidence and trust. A close season will permit the fish to gather;

and remaining unmolested in a young and unripe state, the greater will be the chance of success at the opening of the season. In the eyes of many practical men a close season is viewed as the chief point of legislation now required. The other clauses bear chiefly on the details of the fishery, but, in its further welfare the legalising of all casks and measures is most essential; and any improved basis for dealing between fishermen and their employers, the more particularly if such shall be found to lead to an increase of physical and moral happiness, and to a saving of useless expenditure in capital, must meet with the sympathy and good will of the whole community.

In conclusion, the author is not without some hope that many may see from what has been written the value and importance of our Scottish fisheries in a more striking point of view than previously; for as stated in the introductory part of the volume, in value and importance they hold a first rank.

May the evil of over-production be gradually lessened by a wider field of operation! May the fisheries continue to maintain a high character! May the fisherman be well and fairly paid; and may those employing skill and capital in manufacture flourish more than they have done for some years!

In attempting to plead at the bar of public opinion for an interest to which, from long association, the author has become fondly attached, however much he may regret that greater talent is not in the advocate, still he has humbly done his best to bring before the public the Scottish Fisheries, not in their ordinary dress, but in holiday attire, hoping that by so doing

they may meet with a more welcome reception, and may the better recommend themselves, in their wants, to the generosity and good will of a generous and kindly hearted people.

THE OCEAN.

Thou glorious mirror, when the Almighty's form
Glosses itself in tempests; in all time
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Iceing the pole—or in the torrid clime
Dark heaving; boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless—alone.

BYRON.

APPENDIX.

ABSTRACTS OF ACTS OF PARLIAMENT RELATING TO THE BRITISH WHITE HERRING FISHERY.

An Act for the further encouragement and better Regulation of the British White Herring, until the First day of June, one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, and from thence to the end of the then next Session of Parliament.—*25th June*, 1808.

CLAUSE I.

A Bounty of £3 per ton, to be paid annually to the owners of Busses employed in the Deep-sea British White Herring Fishery. If a hired Buss be employed in the Deep-Sea Fishery, the persons hiring the same shall be entitled to the Bounty as owner.

CLAUSE II.

Manner of fishing in the Deep-sea Fishery.

CLAUSE III.

A Bounty of two shillings per barrel to be paid on White Herrings taken in the British Fishery.

CLAUSE IV.

Recites an Act passed in the thirteenth year of the reign of George the First, appointing twenty-one Trustees for overseeing, directing, and better improving the Linen and Hempen manufactures of Scotland. The number of Trustees by the recited Acts, limited to twenty-one, may be increased to twenty-eight.

CLAUSE V.

His Majesty may appoint seven of the Trustees for Manufactures and Fisheries in Scotland to be Commissioners for the Herring Fishery.

CLAUSE VI.

Commissioners for the Herring Fishery to be sworn.

OATH.

I, A. B. do swear that I will faithfully and honestly, according to the best of my skill and judgment, execute the several powers and trusts reposed in me, by an Act passed in the forty-eighth year of the reign of His Majesty, King George the Third, entituled an Act (here insert the Act); according to the terms and purport of the said Act; and that I am not directly or indirectly concerned as an adventurer in the White Herring Fishery, or as a curer of Herrings, nor will I, so long as I shall continue to act as a Commissioner under the said Act, be concerned either directly or indirectly as an adventurer in the said Fishery, or as a curer of Herrings.—So help me God.

CLAUSE VII.

Commissioners to make a Report to the Board of Trustees for Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland, and to Parliament.

CLAUSE VIII.

The Admiralty to appoint an Officer of the Navy to be Superintendent the Deep-Sea British White Herring Fishery.

CLAUSE IX.

Superintendent to be sworn.

CLAUSE X.

And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful for the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, or any three or more of them, to appoint persons at the respective places on the coast of Great Britain where herrings are caught or cured, and at the Ports or places where vessels are usually fitted out for the British Herring Fishery, and where vessels employed in the said Fishery usually discharge their cargoes, and also at the Ports of exportation, to overlook the curing of all Herrings caught, to take an account of, and

clear out all Salt, Nets, Barrels, and other stores shipped or put on board any Buss, Vessel, or Boat for the said Fishery, and to inspect and take an account of all Herrings landed or exported, and to certify whether the fish are properly pined, cured, and packed, so as to be entitled to the Bounty of two shillings per barrel, or on which the name of the curer thereof, and the name of the Port or place where, and the year when the same were cured, shall not be branded with a hot iron in large, legible, conspicuous, and permanent characters, or on which such mark or marks, character or characters, shall not have been set at the Fishery, as is directed by this Act, or shall not remain thereon distinctly legible, denoting the day on which the same were cured, and that the same were cured gutted; nor for any Barrel of Herrings on which at the time of its being produced to the proper officer of the Fishery, in order to be branded with a mark or character, to denote that the curer thereof is entitled to the Bounty of two shillings per barrel, hereby given, according to the directions of this Act—any such mark or character shall be found to have been formerly branded, or any mark or character shall be found to have been branded pursuant to any former Act, in respect of any bounty per barrel thereby granted, or any mark or character whatsoever formerly branded, shall be found to have been altered or effaced, nor until a mark or character to denote that the curer thereof is entitled to the Bounty hereby given shall be branded thereon, by order and in presence of the proper officer, shall be entitled to the two shillings per barrel hereby granted, or fit to be exported, provided always, that no person shall be appointed an officer for the performance of any of those duties unless such person shall have exercised the trade of a cooper, and been employed in the curing and packing of herrings, and shall be skilful therein, and fully qualified to execute the duties which will be required of him under the provisions of this Act, Certificates of which qualifications shall be transmitted to the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury by such persons, and in such manner, as shall be satisfactory to the said Lords Commissioners; and every such officer so to be appointed shall obey such instructions, orders, or directions, as he shall from time to time receive from the said Commissioners for the Herring Fishery, to be appointed by virtue of this Act, signified under their hands, or under the hand of their Secretary.

CLAUSE XI.

Officers of the Fishery, and Secretary, Officers and Clerks, under the Commissioners of the Herring Fishery, to be sworn.

OATH.

I, A. B., do swear that I will faithfully and honestly, according to the best of my skill and judgment, execute the office and trust committed to me of (the name of the office to be here mentioned), and that I am not directly or indirectly concerned as an adventurer in the White Herring Fishery, or in any other Fishery, or as a curer of fish; nor will I so long as I shall continue to act as—(the name of the office to be here mentioned)—be concerned either directly or indirectly as an adventurer in the said Fishery, or as a curer of fish.—So help me God.

CLAUSE XII.

No net to be used that has a mesh of less than one inch from knot to knot.

CLAUSE XIII.

How Buss shall be fitted out for the Bounty on tonnage, the full number of men not required to be taken on board till arrival at the rendezvous.

CLAUSE XIV.

Description of the voyages to be made by Busses to obtain the Tonnage Bounty.

CLAUSE XV.

Regulations for fitting and clearing out Busses at the Port of outfit to obtain the Tonnage Bounty—Owner or Agent and Master to make oath, and to give Bond—Officer of the Fishery to give the Master a licence to proceed on his voyage.

CLAUSE XVI.

Regulations for examining Busses at the rendezvous of the Deep-sea Fishery.

CLAUSE XVII.

Herrings taken every day by the crews of the Busses, to be distinguished by a mark on the Barrels in which they are cured.

CLAUSE XVIII.

Powers and duties of the Superintendents of the Deep-Sea Fishery.—Herrings may be transhipped out of a Buss at the Deep-Sea Fishery into another vessel, previously to the 16th day of July, and carried into port.

CLAUSE XIX.

Buss not arriving at the rendezvous, or not beginning to fish at the time prescribed, &c., to lose the benefit of obtaining the tonnage Bounty upon certain conditions.

CLAUSE XX.

The Tonnage Bounty not to be paid on any Buss which shall not have on board the full number of men, except in certain cases.

CLAUSE XXI.

The Master of every Buss employed in the Deep-Sea Fishery for the Tonnage Bounty to keep a journal.

CLAUSE XXII.

Regulations with respect to any Buss returning from the Deep-Sea Herring Fishery into a port in Great Britain for the discharge of her cargo.

CLAUSE XXIII.

Commissioners of the Fishery to inquire into any matter of complaint stated in Reports of the Superintendent, and report thereon.

CLAUSE XXIV.

Officer of the Fishery to attend the landing of the Herrings, Salt, &c., out of each Buss, and take account thereof, and certify the same, &c.

CLAUSE XXV.

Officers of the Fishery to transmit the licence, the Master's oath, and the Officer's certificate made on the return and discharge of each Buss, &c., to the Commissioners;—Regulations as to the manner of paying the Bounty of £3 per ton. In case of any omission being made in the journal, the Commissioners may make an abatement of the Bounty.

CLAUSE XXVI.

Restriction of Ports or Places where a Buss may discharge her Crew or Cargo.

CLAUSE XXVII.

Mariners employed in the Deep-sea Fishery exempt from being impressed.

CLAUSE XXVIII.

Owners of Busses entitled to the Tonnage Bounty to pay the Crew two shillings per Barrel on the Herrings taken and cured by them.

CLAUSE XXIX.

Officers to act in absence of Superintendent.

CLAUSE XXX.

Allowing additional Bounty of £1 per ton for the first thirty Busses fitted out for and employed in the Herring Fishery and entitled to the Bounty of £3 per ton.

CLAUSE XXXI.

Regulations for clearing out vessels (other than Busses on the Tonnage Bounty), with Salt &c., for the British Herring Fishery.

CLAUSE XXXII.

Regulations with respect to Vessels or Boats cleared out with salt, and curing and taking on board Herrings at the Fishery, and proceeding therewith to a Port in Great Britain, and including inwards.

CLAUSE XXXIII.

Regulations respecting Vessels arriving from the Fishery, laden with Herrings cured with salt, carried out in a different vessel.

CLAUSE XXXIV.

Herrings, Salt, or other fishing Stores from the fishery, landed contrary to the aforegoing regulations, forfeited.

CLAUSE XXXV.

Regulations respecting Curers having salt stored at the Fishery proceeding to cure herrings therewith.

CLAUSE XXXVI.

What Herrings shall be entitled to the Bounty of two shillings per barrel—And be it further enacted, That the Bounty hereby granted, of two shillings per barrel on White Herrings shall not be paid or allowed for any Herrings which shall not have been taken in the British White Herring Fishery after the first said day of June, or for any Herrings which shall be of bad or indifferent quality, or for any broken Herrings, or for any Herrings which were not originally gutted, or which were cured in bulk, or otherwise than in barrels, or which, having been cured in barrels, shall have been afterwards laid in bulk, or which shall not be repacked or bung-packed, and in all respects properly cured and packed, or of which the barrel shall not contain fish exclusive of the weight of salt and

brine, two hundred and twenty-four pounds weight, except Herrings intended to be exported to any place out of Europe, which shall, and are hereby required to be repacked with great salt, the barrel of which herrings shall contain two hundred pounds weight of *net fish*; nor for any Herrings which shall be contained in any barrel not of sufficient strength, or not containing thirty-two gallons English wine measure. Officer of the Fishery, after the same shall have been produced and inspected by such officer, according to the directions of this Act.

CLAUSE XXXVII.

Bounty of two shillings per barrel, to whom, on what conditions and regulations, and by whom to be paid.

CLAUSE XXXVIII.

Herrings of certain descriptions which are not entitled to the Bounty of two shillings per barrel, produced to the office in order to obtain the Bounty, forfeited. Herrings (not forfeited), produced to obtain the Bounty, and by the officer deemed not entitled thereto, the proprietor insisting on the contrary, in what manner the dispute shall be settled.

CLAUSE XXXIX.

White Herrings repacked going coastwise for exportation to be accompanied with certificate that they were not repacked before the elapse of fifteen days from the day when first cured.

CLAUSE XL.

Certain Herrings prohibited to be exported.

CLAUSE XLI.

Officer to inspect Herrings tendered for exportation.

CLAUSE XLII.

No coast sufferance, or cocket or landing sufferance, from the customs, shall be required for salt, nets, &c., for the Herring Fishery, or herrings, salt, &c., from thence.

CLAUSE XLIII.

Officer of the Fishery to transmit copy of documents of the salt, &c., shipped, and herrings, salt, &c. landed, to the Collector, &c., of the Customs.

CLAUSE XLIV.

Herrings may be cured and packed in half-barrels.

CLAUSE XLV.

Officers of the Fishery may go and remain on board vessels or boats, inspect documents, &c.

CLAUSE XLVI.

Boats employed in the Herring Fishery to have name of the place to which they belong, and name of owner painted thereon.

CLAUSE XLVII.

Officers of the Fishery may enter warehouses, storehouses, &c., of Irish curers.

CLAUSE XLVIII.

Commissioners to appoint the forms of documents, and the manner of carrying this Act into execution.

CLAUSE XLIX.

Persons making false oath guilty of perjury.

CLAUSE L.

Penalty on persons fraudulently branding barrels of herrings with marks appointed to be branded by officers, &c., or falsifying documents.

CLAUSE LI.

Penalty for altering or effacing marks.

CLAUSE LII.

Not to repeal the provisions of Act 38, George III., c. 89.

CLAUSE LIII.

Persons resisting, &c., Officers of the Fishery, to forfeit £50.

CLAUSE LIV.

Penalty on Officers receiving fees.

CLAUSE LV.

Commissioners may allow Premiums or Bounties for fishing herrings in boats exceeding 15 tons in Scotland.

CLAUSE LVI.

Quorum of Commissioners.

CLAUSE LVII.

Penalties and forfeitures how to be sued for.

CLAUSE LVIII.

Provisions relating to Justices, &c., in the execution of their offices, to extend to this Act.

CLAUSE LIX.

Officers not liable to suits for acts done in enforcing this Act.

CLAUSE LX.

Jurisdiction of Sheriffs in Scotland extending.

CLAUSE LXI.

Continuance of Act:—And be it further enacted, That this Act shall continue in force until the first day of June, 1813, and from thence to the end of the then next session of Parliament.

ABSTRACT.

Act to continue and amend several Acts relating to the British White Herring Fishery.—14*th June*, 1815.

CLAUSE I.

Recited Acts further considered—48, 51, 52, and 54, George III.

CLAUSE II.

Advocate and Solicitor General of Scotland added to the Commissioners.

CLAUSE III.

Commissioners to be sworn.

CLAUSE IV.

Reports to be made of their proceedings.

CLAUSE V.

Exportation Bounty repealed.

CLAUSE VI.

Bounty on Herrings increased.—And whereas by the said Act passed in the 48th year of the reign of his present Majesty, it is among other things enacted that there shall be paid for every Barrel of White Herrings caught in the British fisheries, and landed in Great Britain, and which shall be cured and packed according to the said Act, a bounty of two shillings; be it further enacted, that from and after the said first day of June, 1815, the said Bounty of two shillings per barrel shall cease and determine, and in lieu thereof a bounty of four shillings per barrel shall be granted; which bounty of four shillings shall be paid for every barrel of Herrings which shall be caught, landed, cured, and packed according to the direction of the said Act of the 48th year of the reign of his present Majesty

and of this Act, and which shall be produced to and inspected by the proper officer of the fishery after the said first day of June, 1815.

CLAUSE VII.

Crews of Deep-sea Busses may fish Cod or Ling.

CLAUSE VIII.

Superintendent of Deep-sea Fishery to proceed after it is over to the Bays and Coasts.

CLAUSE IX.

Superintendent of Loch and Coast fishery to be appointed.—His duty.

CLAUSE X.

Superintendent authorized to seize Nets.

CLAUSE XI.

Herring Nets set or hauled on Sunday to be forfeited.

CLAUSE XII.

Herring Barrels not to be made in whole or in part of fir, to be half-an-inch throughout, and to contain 32 gallons English wine measure.—29. Geo. II., c. 23.

CLAUSE XIII.

Commissioners empowered to fix the measure by which Fresh Herrings are to be bought and sold.

CLAUSE XIV.

Regulations for clearing out vessels (other than Busses on the Tonnage Bounty) for the British Herring Fishery.

CLAUSE XV.

Unlawful nets to be forfeited.

CLAUSE XVI.

Regulations for clearing out vessels for, and discharging them from, the British Herring Fishery, not to extend to boats which shall not exceed the burthen of four tons.

CLAUSE XVII.

The quantity of salt used daily in curing herrings not required to be specified in account, but oath made of the total quantity used in the cure of the herrings therein mentioned.

CLAUSE XVIII.

Herrings not to be deemed to be gutted within the meaning of this Act unless gutted, cured, and packed within 24 hours after they were taken.

CLAUSE XIX.

Declaration of transhipment may be verified at the port of landing.

CLAUSE XX.

Herrings cured on shore, account of to be kept and delivered to the proper Officer of the Fishery, under a penalty of £5.

CLAUSE XXI.

Copy of such part of said account as relates to gutted herrings to be delivered by the officer to the curer.

CLAUSE XXII.

Bounty allowed on additional barrels used in repacking, and on substituted barrels.

CLAUSE XXIII.

Bung-packed Herrings branded for Bounty may be repacked, and the surplus barrels branded, but no bounty allowed thereon.

CLAUSE XXIV.

Herrings cured otherwise than in bulk not to be mixed with herrings cured in bulk.

CLAUSE XXV.

Herrings cured in bulk to be packed in barrels marked bulk.

CLAUSE XXVI.

Refuse of Red Herrings to be packed and marked Refuse.

CLAUSE XXVII.

Barrels containing herrings cured in pickle in tight vats, pits, cisterns, and hogsheads, not to be marked Bulk.

CLAUSE XXVIII.

Regulations regarding White Herrings imported from Ireland, Isle of Man, or other places in the King's dominions.

CLAUSE XXIX.

Size of letters in words required by this Act to be branded on barrels.

CLAUSE XXX.

Herrings to be fifteen days in salt before being entitled to the Bounty:—And be it further enacted, That no barrel of herrings repacked or bung-packed shall be deemed entitled to the Bounty of four shillings per barrel granted by this Act, unless a space of time not less than fifteen days shall have intervened from and after the day when the said repacked herrings were originally cured and packed, and before the day when the same were begun to be re-

packed, or unless a space of time not less than fifteen days shall have intervened from and after the day when such bung-packed herrings were originally cured and pickled and before the day when the same were completely bung-packed; and if any barrel of herrings re-packed or bung-packed shall be produced to any officer of the Fishery, in order to obtain the said Bounty, not being entitled thereto according to the provisions of this Act, the same shall be forfeited, and shall and may be seized by any officer of the Fishery.

CLAUSE XXXI.

Bounty not to be paid on barrels under certain weight.

CLAUSE XXXII.

At what Ports or places herrings may be branded for Bounty

CLAUSE XXXIII.

Herrings intended for the Bounty hereby granted to be gutted with a knife. Whether or not so gutted, to be specified in account or journal. Part of the Bounty to be withheld from herrings not gutted with a knife.

CLAUSE XXXIV.

Certificate for repacked herrings sent coastwise not required for herrings branded for Bounty.

CLAUSE XXXV.

Barrels under weight not allowed to be exported. If tendered to be shipped to be forfeited.

CLAUSE XXXVI.

Mode of settling disputes between Officers and Curers:—And whereas the provisions in the said Act of the 48th year of the reign of his present Majesty, for settling disputes between Officers of the Fishery and Curers or proprietors of Herrings in certain cases in the said Act mentioned have not been found effectual, be it enacted,

that in every such case, any Justice of the Peace to whom application shall be made, either by the Officer or Curer, shall appoint two skilful persons who shall have no interest in the matter in dispute —one to be nominated by the Officer and the other by the opposite party; and if either party shall fail to make such nomination before or at the time when he shall be required by authority of the said Justice (not being longer than twenty-four hours from the time of being required to make such appointments) so to do, then the said Justice shall nominate one skilful person not interested in the matter of dispute in his place—and the persons so appointed, upon examination of the matters in dispute, shall certify on their oaths, to be taken before the said Justice, their opinions in the matters aforesaid; and if they shall agree in their opinion the matter in dispute shall be settled accordingly; but if the arbitrators so to be appointed shall differ in opinion thereon, the said Justice shall require them to name one other skilful person not interested in the matter in dispute, which person so nominated shall certify upon oath, to be made before the said Justice, his opinion thereon, and the said matter shall then be finally determined accordingly.

CLAUSE XXXVII.

Premiums under recited Acts 48, George III. c. 110, extended to vessels fishing on the coasts of Great Britain, Ireland, or the Isle of Man.

CLAUSE XXXVIII.

What vessels shall be deemed to be fitted out for the British Herring fishery, and what Herrings deemed to be brought from the fishery.

CLAUSE XXXIX.

Commissioners authorized to remit penalties.

CLAUSE XL.

Half Barrels entitled to half Bounty.

CLAUSE XLI.

Commissioners may alter Rules.

CLAUSE XLII.

Penalties and forfeitures—how to be sued for.

CLAUSE XLIII.

Rules, &c., to remain in force.

ABSTRACT.

An Act to amend the several Acts for the encouragement and improvement of the British and Irish Fisheries.—17*th June*, 1824.

CLAUSE I.

After July 5, 1825, Bounties and Allowances on British Herrings under 55. George III., c. 94; 1. and 2. George IV., c. 79; 1. George IV., c. 103; 59. George III., c. 109, and 19, 4, c. 82. Repealed.

CLAUSE II.

After July 5, 1825, to July, 1829, New Bounties shall be paid, viz., 4s., 3s., 2s., and 1s., yearly, for every barrel of Herrings caught and cured according to regulations of British Fisheries Acts; 4s. per Cwt. on dried Cod, cured in Great Britain, until July 5. 1829; Pickled Cod, 2s. 6d., per Barrel, under regulations of 1. George IV., c. 103, until July 5, 1829.

CLAUSE III.

Tonnage Bounty to vessels engaged in the White Fisheries—

20s.	per ton	to 15th July,	1826.
15s.	„	„	1827.
10s.	„	„	1828.
5s.	„	„	1829.

CLAUSE IV.

Bounties under this Act payable as Bounties on Fish and on Tonnage under recited Acts.

CLAUSE V.

Bounties payable in British currency, and shall cease on 5th July, 1829.

CLAUSE VI.

Bounties on Salmon, &c., in Great Britain, under Schedule (C) of 43, George III., c. 69, repealed from 5th July, 1825.

CLAUSE VII.

Bounties on Pilchards exported from Great Britain, from 5th July, 1825, to 1829—

To July 1826,—7s.
To „ 1827,—6s.
To „ 1828,—4s.
To „ 1829,—2s.

} per Cask of 50 Gallons.

CLAUSE VIII.

Fish exempted from all duties on exportation.

CLAUSE IX.

£3000 allowed under 48. George III., c. 110, for encouragement of Scotch Fisheries; and £5000 under 59. George III., c. 109, for Irish Fisheries shall in future be applied in building Piers and Quays; repairing boats of poor fishermen.

CLAUSE X.

Regulations for issuing such Sums in Scotland and Ireland accordingly.

GEO. CORNWALL, PRINTER, ABERDEEN.